



1639—1889

250<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

ADOPTION OF THE FIRST CONSTITUTION

OF THE

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

F  
97  
.C8



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

*Chap.* F37

*Shelf* 42

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.









BirthDay of the State of Connecticut.

---

CELEBRATION

OF THE

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

OF THE

Adoption of the First Constitution

OF THE

STATE OF CONNECTICUT,

BY THE

CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND THE TOWNS OF WINDSOR,  
HARTFORD, AND WETHERSFIELD,

THURSDAY, JANUARY 24TH, A. D. 1889.

HARTFORD, CONN.:

PUBLISHED BY THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

1889.

THE CASE, LOCKWOOD & BRAINARD COMPANY  
PRINTERS AND BINDERS  
HARTFORD, CONN.

F 37  
28



## CONTENTS.

---

|                                                      |    |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|
| PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS, . . . . .                   | 5  |
| ORDER OF EXERCISES, . . . . .                        | 9  |
| OPENING REMARKS BY HON. HENRY BARNARD, . . . . .     | 13 |
| PRAYER BY REV. G. L. WALKER, . . . . .               | 14 |
| ADDRESS BY HON. HENRY BARNARD, . . . . .             | 17 |
| FIRST CONSTITUTION OF CONNECTICUT, . . . . .         | 20 |
| HISTORICAL ADDRESS BY REV. J. H. TWICHELL, . . . . . | 26 |
| BENEDICTION BY REV. FRANCIS GOODWIN, . . . . .       | 54 |
| EVENING EXERCISES, . . . . .                         | 55 |
| ADDRESS BY HON. H. C. ROBINSON, . . . . .            | 57 |
| HON. JOHN HOOKER, . . . . .                          | 63 |
| HON. JOHN H. PERRY, . . . . .                        | 73 |
| HON. ALFRED E. BURR, . . . . .                       | 77 |
| PROF. ALBERT B. HART, . . . . .                      | 84 |
| HON. JOHN G. ROOT, . . . . .                         | 87 |
| HON. JOSEPH R. HAWLEY, . . . . .                     | 89 |
| LETTER FROM EDWARD E. HALE, . . . . .                | 91 |
| ROBERT C. WINTHROP, . . . . .                        | 91 |
| GEORGE E. ELLIS, . . . . .                           | 92 |
| GEORGE F. HOAR, . . . . .                            | 92 |
| JOHN BACH McMASTER, . . . . .                        | 92 |
| D. WILLIAMS PATTERSON, . . . . .                     | 93 |
| JUSTIN WINSOR, . . . . .                             | 93 |
| W. S. SHURTLEFF, . . . . .                           | 93 |
| EDWARD CHANNING, . . . . .                           | 94 |
| ALEXANDER JOHNSTON, . . . . .                        | 95 |
| HENRY B. HARRISON, . . . . .                         | 95 |
| NOAH PORTER, . . . . .                               | 96 |
| GEORGE WILLIAMSON SMITH, . . . . .                   | 96 |
| JOHN WILLIAMS, . . . . .                             | 96 |
| O. H. PLATT, . . . . .                               | 97 |
| CHARLES R. INGERSOLL, . . . . .                      | 97 |
| RICHARD A. WHEELER, . . . . .                        | 97 |
| JOHN M. HALL, . . . . .                              | 98 |



## PRELIMINARY PROCEEDINGS.

---

The first action of the Connecticut Historical Society with reference to the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the first Constitution of the State of Connecticut was taken on the third day of January, 1888, when, upon motion of J. F. Morris, it was

*Voted*, That a committee be appointed to prepare a plan looking to the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the first Constitution in the Connecticut Colony; which anniversary will occur in January, 1889 — and that the committee shall report at a future meeting.

The following were appointed members of the committee: J. H. Trumbull, J. F. Morris, and C. J. Hoadly.

At a meeting of the Society on the third of April, 1888,

The committee appointed to consider the matter of a celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Constitution of Connecticut, reported through Mr. J. F. Morris, but suggested no definite plan. After discussion by the president, Messrs. Morris, Hoadly, Stedman, and Adams, on motion, it was

*Voted*, That S. W. Adams, and Jabez H. Hayden, Esq., of Windsor, be added to the committee, and that it be instructed to prepare an address to the people of the three towns, Windsor, Wethersfield, and Hartford, calling their attention to the matter, and asking their co-operation, the same to be published before the next meeting.

On motion, it was

*Voted*, That the committee be requested to report a plan for the appointment of committees to make arrangements for the celebration.

At a meeting of the Society on the first of May, 1888,

Mr. J. F. Morris reported for the committee on the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the Constitution in Connecticut colony; and said that so far as he could find out, the towns of Windsor and Wethersfield would be willing to co-operate with Hartford in such a celebration; but in what way or to what extent, he was not prepared to say. The committee were considering as the first, perhaps, and very necessary thing to be done, the selection of an orator; no one had been chosen. The day settled upon is January 24, 1889.

The report was accepted, the committee continued, and asked to report progress at a future meeting.

At a meeting of the Society on the eighth of January, 1889, the following matter was brought forward in some remarks by J. F. Morris. John W. Stedman presented this resolution :

WHEREAS, It is deemed proper by the Connecticut Historical Society, acting in its corporate capacity, to celebrate in a becoming manner the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of a State Constitution, in the town of Hartford, by the settlers in the Valley of the Connecticut, therefore

*Resolved*, That \_\_\_\_\_ be appointed a committee of this society, empowered to make all the necessary arrangements for such a celebration as in their judgment may be appropriate, and advertise the same in the public press of the State.

Mr. Morris offered a verbal report from the committee appointed at the January meeting, 1888. He said they had eventually agreed to have a quiet celebration consisting of literary exercises, with an address by Rev. Joseph H. Twichell, in some church or public hall on the 24th inst.

The resolution was passed, and on motion the President appointed the following committee :

Messrs. John W. Stedman (Chairman), Jonathan F. Morris, Charles J. Hoadly, Jabez H. Hayden (of Windsor Locks), Sherman W. Adams, Charles Hopkins Clark, and Edward D. Robbins (of Wethersfield), with power to add to their number.

At the first meeting, Mr. Frank B. Gay was chosen Secretary, and Mr. C. H. Clark desiring to be excused, Mr. Stephen A. Hubbard was appointed in his place.

The general committee had frequent sessions. At their third meeting they were joined by the following committee, appointed to co-operate with the Society, by the General Assembly of the State :

Hon. S. E. Merwin, Lieut.-Governor ; Hons. John M. Hall and E. S. Cleveland, on the part of the Senate ; Hon. John H. Perry, Speaker ; Hons. W. B. Glover and Frank E. Hyde, on the part of the House of Representatives.

The following committees were assigned to carry out the detailed plans of the celebration, after the time and place for holding the same had been fixed upon, and the orator selected :

*On Invitation.* — J. Hammond Trumbull and John W. Stedman.

*On Programme of Exercises.* — J. Hammond Trumbull, J. F. Morris, S. A. Hubbard, and S. W. Adams.

*On Co-operation with the Towns.* — J. H. Hayden, J. F. Morris, S. W. Adams, and C. J. Hoadly.

*On Reception.* — Dr. W. A. M. Wainwright, Dr. Gurdon W. Russell, Rev. Francis Goodwin, James G. Batterson, Samuel Hart, D.D., Dr. E. K. Hunt, Rowland Swift, Charles B. Whiting, W. H. Gross, Stephen Terry, Charles R. Chapman, and Charles H. Clark.

*On Seating the Guests.* — J. G. Rathbun, with power to appoint his assistants.

*Representatives of the Magistrates and Deputies of the first General Court.* — John Hooker, Rev. Francis Goodwin, Thomas

W. Loomis, Rev. Dr. Thomas R. Pyncheon, Henry C. Robinson, Dr. Pinckney W. Ellsworth, Timothy S. Phelps, Roger Welles, Jonathan F. Morris, James C. Pratt, Charles J. Hoadly, Alfred E. Burr, Jabez H. Hayden, H. Sidney Hayden, Horace Bower, John A. Stoughton, Silas W. Robbins, Sherman W. Adams, Stephen A. Hubbard, Elizur S. Goodrich, Winthrop Buck.

*Selectmen.* — Horace H. Ellsworth, George W. Hodge, Fredus M. Case, for *Windsor*; George W. Fowler, Thomas J. Blake, W. Westphal, William Berry, Ralph Foster, for *Hartford*; Josiah G. Adams, Edwin F. Griswold, Willis W. Standish, for *Wethersfield*.



[PROGRAMME OF THE SERVICES.]

1639.

1889.

## ORDER OF EXERCISES

FOR THE

### Celebration

BY THE

## Connecticut Historical Society

AND THE

*Towns of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield,*

OF THE

## FIRST CONSTITUTION OF CONNECTICUT,

[ Adopted January 14, 1639, (O. S.) ]

Held in Hartford, January 24, 1889.

## EXERCISES AT THE FIRST CHURCH.

---

VOLUNTARY — Organ.

DR. N. H. ALLEN.

ANTHEM — Pilgrim's Chorus,

*Verdi.*

"From afar, gracious Lord, Thou did'st gather Thy flock."

PRAYER —

REV. GEORGE LEON WALKER, D.D.

ADDRESS —

By Hon. HENRY BARNARD, LL.D., Senior Vice-President  
of the Society.

[President of the Day, in the absence of Hon. J. Hammond Trumbull,  
President of the Society.]

MUSIC.

READING OF THE CONSTITUTION OF CONNECTICUT,  
adopted 1639,

By His Excellency MORGAN G. BULKELEY,  
Governor of Connecticut.

HYMN —

*Leonard Bacon, D.D.*

HYMN, L. M.

O GOD! beneath thy guiding hand  
Our exiled fathers crossed the sea;  
And, when they trod the wintry strand,  
With prayer and praise they worshiped thee.

Thou heard'st, well pleased, the song, the prayer;  
Thy blessing came, and still its power  
Shall onward through all ages bear  
The memory of that holy hour.

What change! through pathless wilds no more  
 The fierce and naked savage roams!  
 Sweet praise along the cultured shore  
 Breaks from ten thousand happy homes.

Laws, freedom, truth, and faith in God  
 Came with these exiles o'er the waves;  
 And, where their pilgrim feet have trod,  
 The God they trusted guards their graves.

And hear thy name, O God of love!  
 Thy children's children shall adore  
 'Till these eternal hills remove,  
 And Spring adorns the earth no more!

## HISTORICAL ADDRESS —

REV. JOSEPH HOPKINS TWICHELL.

HYMN — Psalm lxxviii.

*Isaac Watts, D.D.*

HYMN, C. M.

LET children hear the mighty deeds  
 Which God performed of old:  
 Which in our younger years we heard,  
 And which our fathers told.

Our lips shall tell them to our sons,  
 And they again to theirs,  
 That generations yet unborn  
 May teach them to their heirs.

Thus shall they learn in God alone  
 Their hope serenely stands;  
 That they may ne'er forget His works,  
 But practice His commands.

DOXOLOGY.

BENEDICTION —

REV. FRANCIS GOODWIN.

## EVENING EXERCISES

AT THE

## Academy of Music.

1. OVERTURE, By COLT'S BAND.
2. ADDRESS, By Hon. HENRY C. ROBINSON.
3. ADDRESS, By JOHN HOOKER, Esq.
4. ADDRESS, By Hon. JOHN H. PERRY.
5. ADDRESS, By Hon. ALFRED E. BURR.
6. ADDRESS, By Prof. ALBERT B. HART.
7. ADDRESS, By Mayor JOHN G. ROOT.
8. ADDRESS, By SENATOR J. R. HAWLEY.
9. ANNOUNCEMENT OF LETTERS OF REGRET.

## EXERCISES AT THE CHURCH.

## OPENING REMARKS.

BY THE HON. HENRY BARNARD,

(Presiding officer of the occasion).

We meet to-day on the invitation and under the auspices of the Connecticut Historical Society, to mark by suitable exercises the fifth jubilee — the 250th anniversary of the foundation of this public State or Commonwealth, and to bring into fresh remembrance the wisdom and virtues of the founders and the grandeur of their work. In the printed programme of the committee, our proceedings begin and end with sacred song and prayer. And now, it is at once our privilege and our duty, in this edifice, the fifth direct architectural succession of the first meeting-house, erected by the town for the worshiping of Almighty God, and for such public assemblages as the common weal might summon — near the spot where the founders were buried more than two hundred years ago — in this hour, and with these surroundings, it is our privilege to have our devotions led by the pastor of this church.

## PRAYER

BY THE REV. GEORGE LEON WALKER, D.D.,

(Pastor of the First Church.)

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, Thou art our God, and we will praise Thee; our Fathers' God and we will exalt Thee. We would abundantly utter the memory of Thy great goodness and would sing of Thy righteousness.

We humbly beseech Thee, from the throne of Thy glory, to behold with favor this assembly of Thy people now gathered before Thee. We meet here to recount the mercies Thou hast showed unto us, and to those who have gone before us, in this land of our pleasant habitation. Especially do we desire to give thanks unto Thee for the great benefits ministered unto us through the lives and the deeds of the founders, on this soil, of the civil and religious institutions here established. We bless thee that thou didst put it into the hearts of our fathers to forsake the land of their birth, and to come across the great waters into the wilderness, to plant here a free and godly commonwealth.

We thank Thee for the courage and the patience with which they endured the hardships and overcame the obstacles belonging to this high endeavor.

We praise thee for the foresight with which they planned; for the wisdom with which they labored; for the steadfastness with which they suffered. We thank Thee for the example we have in their history of Thy oft-time way of working, wherein Thou dost take the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and dost bring about Thy divinest purposes through the instrumentality of the lowly and such as seem to have no strength.

Peculiarly do we praise Thee, at this time, for the memory of Thy servant of this plantation's earliest day — leader of a pilgrim company to this spot — unto whom it was given by Thy good spirit resting upon him, so largely to outline and shape the fabric of this government under which we live. We bless Thee that thou didst take him, as it were, from the sheepfolds, from following the ewes great with young, and brought him to feed Jacob Thy people, and Israel Thine inheritance. We thank thee for the great bestowment and grace dowered upon us, and upon the people of our whole land, through him and through those of wise and understanding hearts whom Thou didst associate with him, in the establishment of this Christian State. We lift up our souls in gratitude for the many, in the successive generations since that far-off day, who have lived in the enjoyment of the privileges here made common to all; who have labored for their perpetuity, or have died in their defence.

And now we beseech Thee that we, upon whom these blessings have come, may not be unmindful of the obligations these favors have laid upon us. Make us worthy to be the successors and inheritors of those of whom, in their day, the world was so little worthy. May the goodly possession we have received as a legacy of piety and truth from their hands be transmitted unimpaired to those who shall come after us.

To this end God bless our commonwealth with prosperity and peace. Let Thy favor rest upon its governor, its judges, and the framers of its laws. Let all who are in places of authority remember that they are in trust for Thee and for those who have appointed them. Let all the inhabitants learn righteousness.

Regard with eminent favor our churches, that pure religion may prevail among us; our schools of learning, that knowledge may be disseminated and increased; our institutions of benevolence, that the sufferings of disease and poverty may be removed or lightened of the heaviest of their burden.

Establish Thy covenant with our children, that the gener-



ation which is to come may know Thee, and forget not the works of God, but keep his commandments.

Above all, help us with one mind to remember that we are but strangers and sojourners here, even as our fathers were. Be Thou with us as Thou wast with them, strengthening for all present duty, and aiding in every forward look of faith and hope. Lead us, O Shepherd of Israel, through all the pilgrimage of this earthly life, and gather us at the end in the one fold of the holy on high: All which petitions we present in His name, who ever lives to make intercession for us — Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## ADDRESS.

BY HON. HENRY BARNARD,

(From the *Hartford Courant's* Report, January 25th.)

After extending a welcome in behalf of the society, to the chief magistrate and officers of the State, to the representatives of the original Connecticut, and of the now larger State, and to the children of the citizens who went out from the original State and had returned to this gathering, Dr. Barnard said :

Two hundred and seventy years ago the first New England settlement was made on the rock of Plymouth.

Two hundred and sixty years ago the settlements had so increased on the borders of Massachusetts Bay that the newcomers found neither room for their herds nor homes. They asked permission of the authorities to move to the westward.

Two hundred and fifty years only, or a little more, have transpired since the first settlement was made on the banks of the Connecticut. The settlers came with their horses and cattle, their implements and their arms, their household goods, and all the necessities of life. The settlements at Watertowne, Dorchester, and Newtowne, were founded, to be soon changed to Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford. Then, without permission of colony or mother country, they met in council, and formed a Constitution under the principles laid down by Hooker in a sermon preached to his congregation the year before, and which, after the lapse of more than two hundred years, was rescued from oblivion by the philological insight of our learned president, Dr. Trumbull. This convention was held in the meeting-house, as it was called, of the First Church of Christ, in Hartford. There

they adopted the first written ordinance of government, in what they called its Fundamental Orders, till then without the name of Constitution, in history. This Constitution was not a consolidation of these towns, nor was it simply a union, but rather a democracy of towns and people. But while it recognized the organization of the towns, it also recognized the people as represented by magistrates and delegates of their own choice.

For one hundred and fifty years our fathers were so busy making history that they forgot to preserve and look after its monuments, except to preserve the records of the town meetings, the courts, and matters of legislation ; but not reflecting that these records might be destroyed, they did not entrust them to that art preservative of all arts — printing. Hence it was found by our own governor (Trumbull), when he had occasion to look up some records, that some of the links were missing. This led him to ask power from the legislature to provide for the collection and preservation of such records and other materials of history.

About this time one of our own citizens (Webster) made the discovery of an early history of Massachusetts (Winthrop's), and through his efforts it was committed to the press. At nearly the same time the Historical Society of Massachusetts was founded, and into this society all these documents, in some thirty volumes of the Trumbull papers, passed, and became the property of a sister State. At about this date also Timothy Dwight, president of Yale college, added to the ordinary objects of a scientific society that of collecting the history of the towns of Connecticut. About a half century later, through the exertions of two or three men, the original Connecticut Historical Society was formed, but its action was soon discontinued by the accidental dispersion of two or three of its members; and it was not till 1839 that a few of our citizens organized this society for the work of historical discussion, research, and collection.

If we act out to the full circumference of our duty to the present ; if we provide institutions of learning of every grade ;

if we perfect our schools, and universities, and libraries, and thus give means of universal development ; if we purify the politics and political institutions of to-day ; we shall in reality work for the prosperity of all future generations. We cannot better anticipate their wants than by a wise provision for our own. And then having completed our duties, we may welcome them in their long succession in the language of Webster, which has come echoing down to us through seventy years :

“Advance then, ye future generations ! We would hail you as you rise in your long succession, to fill the places which we now fill, and to taste the blessings of existence where we are passing, and soon shall have passed our own human duration. We bid you welcome to this pleasant land of the fathers. We bid you welcome to the healthful skies and the verdant fields of New England. We greet your accession to the great inheritance which we have enjoyed. We welcome you to the blessings of good government and religious liberty. We welcome you to the treasures of science and the delights of learning. We welcome you to the transcendent sweets of domestic life, to the happiness of kindred, and parents, and children. We welcome you to the immeasurable blessings of rational existence, the immortal hope of Christianity, and the light of everlasting truth !”

## The First Constitution of Connecticut.

READ BY HIS EXCELLENCY,

MORGAN G. BULKELEY,

Governor of Connecticut.

---

### The "Fundamental Orders;" 1638-9.

#### THE FIRST CONNECTICUT CONSTITUTION.

Forasmuch as it hath pleased the Almighty God by the wise disposition of his divine providence so to order and dispose of things that we the Inhabitants and Residents of Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield are now cohabiting and dwelling in and upon the River of Connectecotte and the lands thereunto adjoining ; and well knowing where a people are gathered together the word of God requires that to maintain the peace and union of such a people there should be an orderly and decent Government established according to God, to order and dispose of the affairs of the people at all seasons as occasion shall require; do therefore associate and conjoin ourselves to be as one Public State or Commonwealth ; and do for ourselves and our Successors and such as shall be adjoined to us at any time hereafter, enter into Combination and Confederation together, to maintain and preserve the liberty and purity of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus which we now profess, as also the discipline of the Churches, which according to the truth of the said Gospel is now practiced amongst us ; as also in our Civil Affairs to

be guided and governed according to such Laws, Rules, Orders, and Decrees as shall be made, ordered, and decreed, as followeth :—

1. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that there shall be yearly two General Assemblies or Courts, the one the second Thursday in April, the other the second Thursday in September following; the first shall be called the Court of Election, wherein shall be yearly chosen from time to time so many Magistrates and other public Officers as shall be found requisite: Whereof one to be chosen Governor for the year ensuing and until another be chosen, and no other Magistrate to be chosen for more than one year; provided always, there be six chosen besides the Governor, which being chosen and sworn according to an Oath recorded for that purpose, shall have power to administer justice according to the Laws here established, and for want thereof, according to the rule of the Word of God; which choice shall be made by all that are admitted freemen and have taken the Oath of Fidelity, and do cohabit within this Jurisdiction (having been admitted Inhabitants by the major part of the Town wherein they live)\* or the major part of such as shall be then present.

2. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that the Election of the aforesaid Magistrates shall be on this manner: every person present and qualified for choice shall bring in (to the persons deputed to receive them) one single paper with the name of him written in it whom he desires to have Governor, and he that hath the greatest number of papers shall be Governor for that year. And the rest of the Magistrates or public Officers to be chosen in this manner: the Secretary for the time being shall first read the names of all that are to be put to choice and then shall severally nominate them distinctly, and every one that would have the person nominated to be chosen shall bring in one single

---

\* This clause was interlined in a different handwriting and is of a later date. It was adopted by the General Court of November, 1643.

paper written upon, and he that would not have him chosen shall bring in a blank: and every one that hath more written papers than blanks shall be a Magistrate for that year; which papers shall be received and told by one or more that shall be then chosen by the court and sworn to be faithful therein; but in case there should not be six chosen as aforesaid, besides the Governor, out of those which are nominated, then he or they which have the most written papers shall be a Magistrate or Magistrates for the ensuing year, to make up the aforesaid number.

3. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that the Secretary shall not nominate any person, nor shall any person be chosen newly into the Magistracy, which was not propounded in some General Court before, to be nominated the next Election; and to that end it shall be lawful for each of the Towns aforesaid by their deputies to nominate any two whom they conceive fit to be put to election; and the Court may add so many more as they judge requisite.

4. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that no person be chosen Governor above once in two years, and that the Governor be always a member of some approved congregation, and formerly of the Magistracy within this Jurisdiction; and all the Magistrates, Freemen of this Commonwealth: and that no Magistrate or other public officer shall execute any part of his or their office before they are severally sworn, which shall be done in the face of the court if they be present, and in case of absence by some deputed for that purpose.

5. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that to the aforesaid Court of Election the several Towns shall send their deputies, and when the Elections are ended they may proceed in any public service as at other Courts. Also the other General Court in September shall be for making of laws, and any other public occasion, which concerns the good of the Commonwealth.

6. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that the Governor shall, either by himself or by the secretary, send out

summons to the constables of every Town for the calling of these two standing Courts, one month at least before their several times: And also if the Governor and the greatest part of the Magistrates see cause upon any special occasion to call a General Court, they may give order to the Secretary so to do within fourteen days' warning: and if urgent necessity so require, upon a shorter notice, giving sufficient grounds for it to the deputies when they meet, or else be questioned for the same; And if the Governor and major part of Magistrates shall either neglect or refuse to call the two General standing Courts or either of them, as also at other times when the occasions of the Commonwealth require, the Freemen thereof, or the major part of them, shall petition to them so to do; if then it be either denied or neglected, the said Freemen, or the major part of them, shall have power to give order to the Constables of the several Towns to do the same, and so may meet together, and choose to themselves a Moderator, and may proceed to do any act of power which any other General Court may.

7. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that after there are warrants given out for any of the said General Courts, the Constable or Constables of each Town shall forthwith give notice distinctly to the inhabitants of the same, in some public assembly or by going or sending from house to house, that at a place or time by him or them limited and set, they meet and assemble themselves together to elect and choose certain deputies to be at the General Court then following to agitate the affairs of the Commonwealth; which said deputies shall be chosen by all that are admitted Inhabitants in the several Towns and have taken the oath of fidelity; provided that none be chosen a Deputy for any General Court which is not a Freeman of this Commonwealth.

The aforesaid deputies shall be chosen in manner following: every person that is present and qualified as before expressed, shall bring the names of such, written in several papers, as they desire to have chosen for that employment,



and these three or four, more or less, being the number agreed on to be chosen for that time, that have greatest number of papers written for them shall be deputies for that Court; whose names shall be endorsed on the back side of the warrant and returned into the Court, with the constable or constables' hand unto the same.

8. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that Windsor, Hartford, and Wethersfield shall have power, each Town, to send four of their Freemen as their deputies to every General Court; and whatsoever other Towns shall be hereafter added to this Jurisdiction, they shall send so many deputies as the Court shall judge meet, a reasonable proportion to the number of Freemen that are in the said Towns being to be attended therein; which deputies shall have the power of the whole Town to give their votes and allowance to all such laws and orders as may be for the public good, and unto which the said towns are to be bound.

9. It is Ordered and decreed, that the deputies thus chosen shall have power and liberty to appoint a time and a place of meeting together before any General Court, to advise and consult of all such things as may concern the good of the public, as also to examine their own Elections, whether according to the order, and if they or the greatest part of them find any election to be illegal they may seclude such for present from their meeting, and return the same and their reasons to the Court; and if it prove true, the Court may fine the party or parties so intruding, and the Town, if they see cause, and give out a warrant to go to a new election in a legal way, either in part or in whole. Also the said deputies shall have power to fine any that shall be disorderly at their meetings, or for not coming in due time or place according to appointment; and they may return the said fines into the Court if it be refused to be paid, and the Treasurer to take notice of it, and to escheat or levy the same as he does other fines.

10. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that every General Court, except such as through neglect of the Gov-

ernor and the greatest part of Magistrates the Freemen themselves do call, shall consist of the Governor, or some one chosen to moderate the Court, and four other Magistrates at least, with the major part of the deputies of the several Towns legally chosen; and in case the Freemen, or major part of them, through neglect or refusal of the Governor and major part of the Magistrates, shall call a Court, it shall consist of the major part of Freemen that are present or their deputies, with a Moderator chosen by them: In which said General Courts shall consist the supreme power of the Commonwealth, and they only shall have power to make laws or repeal them, to grant levies, to admit of Freemen, dispose of lands undisposed of, to several Towns or persons, and also shall have power to call either court or Magistrate or any other person whatsoever into question for any misdemeanor, and may for just causes displace or deal otherwise according to the nature of the offence; and also may deal in any other matter that concerns the good of this Commonwealth, except election of Magistrates, which shall be done by the whole body of Freemen.

In which Court the Governor or Moderator shall have power to order the Court, to give liberty of speech, and silence unseasonable and disorderly speakings, to put all things to vote, and in case the vote be equal to have the casting voice. But none of these Courts shall be adjourned or dissolved without the consent of the major part of the Court.

11. It is Ordered, sentenced, and decreed, that when any General Court upon the occasions of the Commonwealth have agreed upon any sum or sums of money to be levied upon the several Towns within this Jurisdiction, that a committee be chosen to set out and appoint what shall be the proportion of every Town to pay of the said levy, provided the committee be made up of an equal number out of each Town.

14th January, 1638 [N. S., 24th January, 1639], the 11 Orders abovesaid are voted.

## HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

BY THE REV. JOSEPH H. TWICHELL.

MR. PRESIDENT; GENTLEMEN OF THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY;  
YOUR EXCELLENCY; HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE AND  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES; AND FELLOW CITIZENS:

Two hundred and fifty years ago to-day there were assembled in this town a company of men, probably somewhat above two hundred in number, the same being the body of the male adults of the three plantations of Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford, constituting the Connecticut Colony, then less than three years old. To this gathering, plodding down the miry or snowy paths, on foot most of them, among those who came up from Wethersfield, with Magistrates Andrew Ward and William Swain, were men of the not unfamiliar names of Foote, Adams, Goodrich, Mitchell, Hubbard, Sherman, Robbins; and among those coming down from Windsor, with Pastor Warham and Magistrates William Phelps and Rodger Ludlow (lately Deputy Governor of Massachusetts Bay), and Captain John Mason, and Constable Henry Wolcott; men of the names of Grant, Gaylord, Gillette, Clark, Holcomb; and among the men of Hartford, who, with Pastors Hooker and Stone and Magistrates Welles, Steele, and Haynes (lately Governor of Massachusetts Bay), who greeted their arrival, those of the names of Allyn, Hopkins, Wadsworth, Goodman, Olmsted, Talcott, Pratt, Hosmer.

The place of their assemblage was the town meeting-house, which stood nearly upon the site of the former State Capitol, now the City Hall of Hartford. They were present in their capacity of freemen of their several towns, and for

the purpose of framing for themselves "an orderly and decent government"; which purpose they accomplished by then and there adopting a Constitution of eleven "Orders" or Articles to be the supreme civil law of their community; so, according to their own expression, "associating and conjoining themselves to be as one public State or commonwealth."

It is evident that the business had been amply canvassed and prepared beforehand, since one brief winter day sufficed to bring it to a conclusion. But thus our State of Connecticut was born; or rather I should say was born into terms of a more formal and finished incorporation; for it existed already in fact, as will be hereafter considered.

Not at all impressive in its externals—except it must have been marked by impressiveness of face and demeanor, and certainly by impressiveness of speech—this occasion was of a character so extraordinary, and drew in its train consequences of such a nature and of such magnitude, as to constitute it undoubtedly the most memorable occasion of the modern ages.

That assemblage was the first of its kind ever held—a convention met to provide a permanent general government for a people, in which the people all took part. The eleven "Orders" or Articles in which that unique popular convention embodied the law of the new State, was "the first written Constitution in the history of nations." The government under that law which it ordained was the first government of *law alone*, alike for magistrate and for private citizen, that was ever framed.

In the institution of this government there was recognized no outside human authority whatsoever as the source and basis of its powers. It was to be "established according to God," but no King, nor charter, nor Parliament, nor previously existing government had mention in the instrument upon which it was organized. The Connecticut Constitution of 1639 was the first, the original, practical assertion on earth of the democratic idea of government, of the principle

that "governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed." In none other of the American colonies had this principle, at that time, any place. There was, to be sure, popular suffrage at Plymouth, but distinctly on a religious rather than a political construction of its purport. The Mayflower cabin compact, sometimes denominated the dawning point of American democracy, had formally acknowledged the King as the source of all authority. The government of the mother colony of Massachusetts was a government by royal charter, and at that time was exercised by a magistracy in limited association with a privileged class of freemen. It was the same in the New Haven colony, which was then and for twenty-six years thereafter a separate jurisdiction.

It does not in any respect exceed the strict truth to affirm, as does our latest historian, Professor Johnston, of Princeton College,—whose compendious little book, let me say, is a masterly piece of work and ought to be in every home in the State—that "the government of the people, by the people, for the people, first took shape in Connecticut," and that "the American form of commonwealth originated here and not in Massachusetts, Virginia, or any other colony,"—that "the birth-place of American democracy is Hartford." The same admirable writer, expressing the hope that this day would not pass without some proper celebration amongst us of the great deed the men of Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford performed two centuries and a half ago, announces as the result of his most thoughtful and mature survey of it, the conviction that it is "the most far-reaching political work of modern times," from which direct lines of communication run down "to all the great events which followed, to commonwealth organization and colonial resistance, to national independence and federation, to national union and organization, and even to national self-preservation and reconstruction."

In contemplating our fathers engaged so long ago in this work, which time has discovered to have been so grandly

done, the question arises concerning *their* thought of it. What measure of it did they themselves take? How conscious were they of its import?

Dr. Horace Bushnell, — dear and venerable name, starred forever in the roll of Connecticut's noblest sons, — in his notable address before the New England Society of New York, in 1849, says that they were largely *unconscious* of the meaning of it, and were great in that unconsciousness. Which, as regards foresight of its outcome, of its scope in relation to the future, is certainly true. They considered, indeed, that they were building for their posterity, and spoke of it; but though there were among them men, by learning and by perusal of the ways of Providence, as capable of seership as any, there is no evidence that of the mighty unfoldings that lay beyond the horizon of their day, they had even the dimmest anticipation. It is more than a generation later, that Cotton Mather, in one of his magniloquent prefaces, addressed to the churches of the Colony of Connecticut, speaks of them as having been in the providence of Heaven, "whereby the bounds of people are set," carried so far westward, "that some have pleasantly said the last conflict with anti-Christ must be in your colony."

They were here mainly for religion. As they were guided in their journey hither through the untracked wilderness by the compass, so having arrived, they sought only, in what they should establish, to be guided by the mind of God. And thus with present duty, so highly conceived, alone in view, they laid their lines, unwittingly, in a wisdom that was to prove wisdom and supreme statesmanship on and on in all those vast outgrowths and fulfillments ahead which they saw not. Faithful in that which was least they were faithful also in much, according to the divine rule.

Yet there is, too, a sense in which they did well understand what they were doing, and were great in their *consciousness*. They understood that they were instituting a scheme of civil government without precedent; that they

were founding their State on a principle of authority that in that province was new. Of which there is abundant testimony of one kind and another. Dr. Leonard Bacon — again a dear and venerable name — has called attention to what he regards a striking sign thereof which appears in the letter of the Constitution itself, viz.: in the repeated formula of adoption prefixed to its several articles. The conventional phrase “Be it enacted,” as traditionally prefixed to each section of a parliamentary statute, bore originally, as he expounds, a meaning of petition; *may* it be enacted, i. e., by the sovereign. This phrase those men of Wethersfield, Windsor, and Hartford rejected, substituting for it in every instance, “*it is* ordered, sentenced and decreed,” and they must have done it intelligently, and as signifying that they held their action subject to no review, confirmation, or veto by any outside authority. To be sure, there was no jurisdiction over them claimed *this* side of the Atlantic, or anywhere else — audibly to them at all events; and we may well suppose that they regarded themselves hid away by distance and obscurity and insignificance — as in fact they were — from observation the other side of the Atlantic. (There was no other colony, it should be considered, that was *free* to do what they did.) It was not a note of defiance and revolt that they thus sounded. It only showed that they were distinctly aware of founding a government on the sole authority, under God, of the will of the people.

Another mark of their clear minds as to the peculiarity of the political structure they were creating appears also in the Constitution. It appointed the holding at such and such times, of two assemblies or courts, the one a court of election to choose a Governor and six magistrates, the other a general court, composed of the Governor and magistrates and a body of deputies elected by the towns, not exceeding four from each, to meet “for making of laws and any other public occasion which concerns the good of the commonwealth.” It was made the duty of the Governor to issue seasonable notice for the convening of these courts. It



was also made the duty of the Governor, with the concurrence of a majority of the magistrates, upon the arising of any need therefor, to call *special* meetings of the same. It provided, furthermore, that if the Governor and major part of the magistrates "shall either neglect or refuse to call the two general standing courts, or either of them, as also at other times when the occasions of the commonwealth require; the freemen thereof, or the major part of them, shall petition them to do so; if, then, it be either denied or neglected, *the said freemen*, or the major part of them, shall have power to give order to the Constables of the several towns to do the same, and so may meet together and choose to themselves a moderator, and may proceed to do any act of power, which any other general court may."

The sense of which is very unmistakable. They definitely meant a democracy and nothing else.

But in order to have before us the full proof that such was their counsel; that their action was not anything they happened upon; was not extempore or dictated by present convenience, but was of principle, and by them profoundly understood, we shall have to go back a space in history and note certain *antecedents* of the situation that go far to explain this, its so famous events, and not only so, but to explain the existence of the Connecticut colony. For the fact is, as we shall see, our forefathers of the colony came to Connecticut as much as for anything else, to say the least, to do that thing.

During the three or four years of the great Puritan influx beginning with 1630, the greater part of those who later settled our three river towns emigrated from England and became founders and inhabitants of Dorchester, Newtown (now Cambridge), and Watertown, in Massachusetts. There they were under jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Bay colony. The administration of affairs in that colony was by its charter originally intrusted to a magistracy consisting of a governor, deputy governor, and eighteen assistants to be



elected by the freemen. But four times a year the magistrates and the freemen were to meet in a general court, "with full power to choose and admit into the company so many as they should think fit, to elect and constitute all requisite subordinate officers, and to make laws and ordinances for the welfare of the company, and for the government of the lands, and the inhabitants of the plantation." A liberal charter, astonishingly so, considering that it was the grant of King Charles I. ; and that, only a few days before, in 1629, he proclaimed his design of thereafter ruling England without the aid of Parliament. It only substantiates the truth of what Mr. Bancroft says, that the early New England community was "so humble that no statesman condescended to notice it."

The liberal charter of the Bay colony was, indeed, *too* liberal. So thought many of the leaders of the colony, the men chief in wealth, social rank, and influence ; so thought Governor John Winthrop ; so thought the assistants, most of them ; so thought a majority of the ministers, *i. e.*, if you construed it to mean — which they did not — that the freemen might have a controlling voice in affairs, or equal authority with the magistrates ; or, for that matter, any authority at all except to choose the magistrates. So thought *not*, it presently transpired, a considerable element among the freemen. There was difficulty in adjusting the relations of magistrates and people from the very outset ; and it was long continued. It lasted — the conflict assuming various phases in turn — till near the end of the century. At first, the freemen, largely it would seem under the advice of the ministers, gave ground, and consented to the supremacy of the magistrates. At the first general court held October 19, 1630, it was propounded as the best course to be adopted in government "that the freemen should have power of choosing assistants, the assistants to choose from amongst themselves a governor and deputy, which governor and deputy, with the assistants, should have the power of making laws and choosing officers to execute the same," and to this the freemen, numbering about one hundred and twenty,

agreed, *i. e.*, to this usurpation — for such it actually was. But it was a few months only after the arrival ; the colony was in bitter straits of want ; all were in distress together ; how to keep alive was the main concern ; it was really a makeshift policy prescribed by necessity ; and the usurped powers were mildly used. However, the year following, in 1631, the freemen defined their right to elect the assistants to be the right to elect them *annually*, and to remove them for cause. But this check upon the government was more than offset by the decree of the authorities that same year, prompted by uneasiness at the number of new arrivals seeking admission to the list of freemen, that thereafter none should be endowed with “ the liberties of the commonwealth,” *i. e.*, with the gift of the elective franchise, but members of the church,—than which probably no limitation of civil privilege was ever better intended.

The magistrates had gathered the reins of government into their hands, but matters would not so rest. With easier times, which were not long delayed, freeing the minds of the people to give thought to the political situation—to attend to their general interests, and to mark the doings of the powers that were—there straightway arose discontent, criticism, dissension, debate, and a disposition clearly manifest not to leave things as they were—to undo some things. The towns made trouble about accepting the acts of the government in various cases—conspicuously the three towns which subsequently migrated to Connecticut. Why, could be considerably explained, perhaps, might we extend our notice of antecedents further back still across the ocean ; but so it was.

In 1631, Watertown, for instance, by advice of their pastor Phillips, and elder Brown, “ delivered to the people assembled ” that it “ was not safe to pay moneys after that sort for fear of bringing themselves and their posterity into bondage,” resisted the decree of an assessment, and had to be managed ; Governor Winthrop explaining to the malcontents, as he recites in his journal, “ that this government was of

the nature of a parliament, and that no assistant could be chosen but by the freemen, who had power likewise to remove the assistants; whereupon," he says, "they were fully satisfied, and so their submission was accepted and their offense pardoned." But their penitence was not lasting.

In 1632, the governor had to go to Newtown to compose, with the help of mediating friends, a serious difficulty with his own deputy, Thomas Dudley, residing there, relating in part to the "ground and limits of the governor's official authority whereby patent or otherwise," the contention between them being very hot and failing to *be* composed then or at any time; notwithstanding (so the governor records) "they usually met about their affairs, and that without any appearance of any breach or discontent, and ever after kept peace and good correspondency together in love and friendship." Which was true, no doubt, for they were warmly attached Christian friends, but differed in politics.

Simultaneously, in Dorchester the same temper of jealousy and recalcitration was awake, as we may judge from the circumstance that a little later Israel Stoughton, a deputy to the general court from that town (it was the first year such town representatives were conceded place in the court, and then to vote on the taxes, not on the laws,) was sentenced to three years' disfranchisement as the penalty of uttering the heresy that the charter made the power of the governor and assistants "*ministerial* according to the greater vote of the general court, and not *magisterial* according to their own discretion." Later yet (in 1635), the same offender in a private letter described the political condition of the colony at that initial stage thus: "When I came into the country, and for one whole year after, the government was solely in the hands of the assistants. The people chose their magistrates, and then *they* made laws, disposed of lands, raised moneys, punished offenders, etc., at their discretion; neither did the people know the patent, nor what prerogative and liberty they had of the same."

Before *this* time, though, the people did know something

on those points, for the concession of a representation of the towns in the general court, with such voice therein as I have just stated, had ensued upon the towns, by a committee of two from each, going to Boston and asking for a sight of the charter, which having seen, "they conceived thereby," says Winthrop, "that all their laws should be made at the general court, and repaired to the governor (*i. e.*, himself) to advise with him about it," and about the abrogation of some orders formerly made; who told them (paternally) that when the patent was granted the number of freemen "was supposed to be so few that they might well join in making laws, but now there were so many that it was not possible." Hereafter, indeed, he added, "they might have a select company to intend that work, yet for the present they were not furnished with a sufficient number of men qualified for such a business;" and concluded with authorizing or granting the representation aforementioned. But Israel Stoughton of Dorchester was not satisfied with that free rendering, and put forth *his* interpretation of the charter, and so made it necessary that he should be suppressed.

I have quoted instances enough to show how troubled were the waters in which the Bay colony's ship of State was launched, and the causes by which they were troubled. The strife about government was inevitable. Nobody could help it. The acid and alkali of the antagonistic principles of aristocracy and democracy were thrown together — the true quality of each disguised by complication with religion — and what came of it was but the natural result. Nor considering that the elements opposed were absolutely irreconcilable did any men ever in the world sustain the test of character inherent in such a situation more creditably to themselves and to human nature, than did the men of the infant Massachusetts colony in their divided counsels. The wonder is, not that they developed so much bitterness in the circumstances, but that they developed so little. They strove with one another on terms of cordial, unbroken, mutual respect in the main all round. The aristocrats, as a

class, were marked by the spirit of brotherliness and magnanimity. John Winthrop, their leader, was one of the noblest souls that ever lived, transparently brave, strong, high-minded, gentle, unselfish, caring for nothing but the honor of God, and the best good of man as he understood it, — a genuinely great man.

The protracted and involved story of the war of ideas in the Bay, so early inaugurated, were quite too long to tell. Nor is there any reason why it should be told further now. In what of it I have touched, I have desired only to indicate the state of things in "the Bay" that met Thomas Hooker and his two hundred fellow emigrants when they reached there by the ship *Griffin*, in September, 1633, and took up their abode as a body in Newtown.

"Mr. Hooker's company"—as it was usually called—was the most considerable accession in numbers, but especially in quality, the colony had received. While Hooker was the recognized leader of it, as its bearing his name suggests, there were other men included in it who were of mark for ability, accomplishments, and character; as, for example, Samuel Stone, Hooker's colleague in the ministry. But pre-eminent among them John Haynes, a gentleman of ancient family and large estate in Essex, who became Connecticut's first governor, and was reëlected to that office every alternate year as long as he lived, and who is scarcely second to Hooker in his title to be named our Founder. The same ship brought also the distinguished John Cotton, who came, as Palfrey says, "from twenty years in the pulpit of one of the most stately parish churches in England to preach the gospel within the mud walls and under the thatched roof of the meeting-house in a rude New England hamlet," which Boston then was.

No sooner was the new company here than it found itself involved in the brew and ferment of the conflict that was agitating the colony. John Cotton, who had been inducted into his pastoral office immediately on his arrival, and the complexion of whose political belief is reflected in his saying,

"Democracy I do not conceive that ever God did ordain as a fit government either for church or commonwealth," at once took sides, vigorously, aggressively, and with the magistrates; preaching at the court of election held May 14, 1634 — the court at which he was initiated into the liberties of the commonwealth,—a sermon upon the subject of the tenure of the magisterial office, just then in dispute, maintaining that "A magistrate ought not to be turned into the condition of a private man without just cause," *i. e.*, that his tenure was permanent. To which the freemen forthwith responded, when it came to the election, by retiring Governor Winthrop to his face, whom, personally, all loved and revered, and putting Thomas Dudley in his place. And the next year after they repeated the act by retiring Thomas Dudley and choosing John Haynes governor, and making other changes in the magistracy "partly (says Winthrop) because the people would exercise their absolute power"—such of it as they had.

It was to this same court that the Newtown people, eight months only after Mr. Hooker came, on the plea of "straitness for want of room," applied for leave to look out either for enlargement or removal; which application was granted. But at the court that met the September following they applied further for leave to remove to Connecticut, *i. e.*, for leave to go entirely away. Upon this application the vote of the court was divided; the deputies being fifteen to ten for granting it; the magistrates, all but the governor and two assistants, for denying it. Of which two assistants it is reasonable to conjecture Mr. Haynes, who was in that office at the time, was one.

Although the principal motive that we must judge lay behind this application is already not doubtfully to be guessed, it will be interesting to note the grounds on which it was this second time formally based. They were, succinctly, three: First, want of room in Massachusetts, as before. Second, the fruitfulness and commodiousness of Connecticut, and the danger of having it possessed by



others, Dutch or English. Third, "the strong bent of their spirits to remove thither."

Whatever the weight of the first two reasons in the minds of the applicants, whether more or less,—and they had some weight, for, as farming and grazing communities they *were* crowded; it was alleged by Mr. Hooker (notes Winthrop) as "a fundamental error" that the towns were set so near to each other; and reports of explorers had spread information of the eligibility of Connecticut for settlement; and there *was* apprehension in the colony lest the Dutch, or other English than they desired, should plant themselves in it,—it can scarcely be mistaken that the unexplained "bent of spirit" named for the third reason expressed a motive more potent in the case than either of the others, or both of them together. No more can what were the main inducing causes of that "bent" be mistaken.

The reasons urged *against* granting the petition are also of interest, and even of pathetic interest, it seems to me. As supplied by Winthrop's journal, they are, with slight abridgment, these: First, "That in point of conscience they ought not to depart from us, being knit to us in one body, and bound by oath to seek the welfare of this commonwealth." Second, That "in point of State and civil policy we ought not to give them leave to depart, being we were now weak and in danger to be assailed; and the departure of Mr. Hooker would not only draw many from us, but also divert other friends that would come to us," besides "we should expose them to peril both from the Dutch and the Indians," and perhaps from the King for their unsanctioned occupation of territory. Third, "They might be accommodated at home by some enlargement which other towns offered." Fourth, "They might remove to Merrimac or any other place within our patent." Fifth, "The removing of a candlestick is a great judgment which is to be avoided."

These objections surely constituted no mean argument. The proposed emigration would be, surely, a sad dismember-

ment of the little commonwealth, whose chief poverty (as John Cotton said) was poverty of man. The whole population of the Bay was less than four thousand souls, from which such an exodus as was planned, of three towns out of eight, would subtract nearly a third; and if other elements of strength than numbers were counted, that proportion did by no means represent the loss to be inflicted. It cannot be supposed that men like Hooker and Haynes and their associates were insensible to the appeal of such considerations, or did not feel their entire force; especially when brought home to them by the urgencies of private expostulation and entreaty from those to whom they were intimately bound in ties of friendship and a peculiar sympathy in many important respects, toward whom they ever entertained sentiments of the highest esteem. And it appears that after the answer before stated had been returned by the court to their application, under the influence of endeavors put forth to provide them room, and of persuasion, and possibly, of Mr. Haynes's elevation to the Governorship, which they may have construed as importing some promise of the abatement or cure of certain ills in the State, they did for a season suspend the enterprise of migration. But for a season only. The matter had gone too far; too many were enlisted in it, to permit it to be abandoned. Detachments from the disaffected towns began to make their way to Connecticut, leave or no leave. Meanwhile the political cauldron ceased not to boil in Massachusetts; the contention concerning magistrates, in particular, growing more acute than ever. The movement was shortly resumed. Following the example of Newtown, the inhabitants of Watertown, at the General Court in May, 1635; and at its adjourned meeting, the next month, those of Dorchester; sought permission of removal—whither the record does not specify, though doubtless it was to Connecticut—and in each case were granted “liberty to remove themselves to any place they shall think meet to make choice of, provided they continue still under this government.” Which certainly was not saying that they might go to Connecticut.



On the subject of removal, Newtown, it is to be observed, did not further trouble the court, and that for a reason that deserves to be remarked. It will be remembered that the vote on her application in September, 1634, for leave to remove to Connecticut had been a divided one; the magistrates by a majority being against it, the deputies, the commons, by a majority for it. Whereupon the question arose whether or no it was *granted*. The magistrates said it was not. But Newtown claimed that it *was*, and held the business concluded, which is significant of her position in the war of opinion that was vexing the colony.

The exodus took place in the year 1636. By the close of the summer of that year half the people of Dorchester, the larger portion of the people of Watertown, and the strength of Newtown, were dwellers in a new Dorchester, Watertown, and Newtown on the banks of the Connecticut.

The same migration also included a company from Roxbury that planted itself at Agawam (now Springfield), and was a member of the Connecticut colony till, ere the Constitution was formed, the boundary line was drawn that restored it to the Bay.

So then was accomplished, not without displeasure and grief, and efforts of obstruction on the part of the officials of the mother colony, yet in the event without breach of friendship, the desired departure out of her jurisdiction. It was by the magistrates of the Bay never consented to. The only permission it had was the tacit one implied in a certain provision made at request, when it was on the point to be off, by the General Court — which there will be occasion to speak of by-and-by — for the temporary rule of the separating community and a loan of arms and ammunition for its protection.

That it was such a secession as the facts we have glanced at would lead us to think — prepönderantly political in its motive — that one immediate end it was designed to secure was escape from the jurisdiction of the Bay, is an inference more definitely justified still by the ascertained

views and principles of the man who was its acknowledged head.

Of the attitude assumed by Thomas Hooker on the questions of government over which he had found the colony in turmoil, nothing has been said. Nor is there much to be said. How he sided in his opinions is sufficiently plain. He made no concealment of it. But apparently he took no very open part—at least no forward part—in the public dispute. As far as possible from a timid or a compromising man, he was not of a pugnacious temper, and his spirit was tolerant. It is one of his recorded sayings that “if men would be tender and careful to keep off offensive expressions, they might keep some distance in opinion without hazard to truth or love.” Moreover, the chiefs of the dominant class, *i. e.*, those who stood for the aristocratic theory, were men he too much honored, not to make it an extremely unacceptable thing to him to antagonize them. Then again, as we have seen, shortly after their arrival, in less than a year, he and his company had made up their minds to withdraw from the colony as soon as might be; that on the whole, there being so convenient and goodly a land as Connecticut to withdraw to, it was advisable for the minority to do so rather than stay and fight out their differences with their friends. Accordingly during the three years he remained in Massachusetts he seems to have preserved the posture of a pacificator rather than of a partisan. Not that he was without weight in the contest going on, for his views were well-known, and that they favored the cause of the freemen. He was felt to be their ally, and the circumstance visibly emboldened their policy. One of the early annalists of New England, Hubbard, reports that “after his coming it was observed that many of the freemen grew to be very jealous of their liberties.”

But in a correspondence of his with Winthrop, from Connecticut, in the fall of 1638, primarily respecting a boundary question and other business affairs, there occurs a luminous and impressive disclosure—all the more impress-

ive since it is incidental — of what the political convictions and sentiments were which he had entertained at that time ; which he brought with him across the seas. The correspondence exhibits the most essential convictions and sentiments of *both* men, indeed. Winthrop, who wrote first, has affirmed “the unwarrantableness and unsafeness of referring matter of council of judicature to the body of the people, because the best part is always the least, and of that best part the wiser part is always the lesser. The old law was : ‘Thou shalt bring the matter to the judge.’”

To which Hooker rejoins, “*That in the matter which is referred to the judge, the sentence should be left to his discretion. I ever looked at it as a way which leads directly to tyranny, and so to confusion ; and must plainly profess, if it was in my liberty, I should choose neither to live, nor leave my posterity, under such a government. Let the judge do according to the sentence of the law. Seek the law at its mouth. The heathen man said, by the light of common sense. ‘The law is not subject to passion, and therefore ought to have chief rule over rulers themselves.’ It’s also a truth that counsel should be sought from councillors. But the question yet is, who those should be. In matters of greater consequence, which concern the common good, a general council chosen by all, to transact businesses which concern all, I conceive, under favor, most suitable to rule, and most safe for relief of the whole.*”

In these so pregnant and weighty words, which deserve to be spread in letters of gold on the walls of our Capitol, penned in a settler’s rude abode in this town of Hartford, is contained the first known definite pronouncement of the democratic principle of civil rights and civil liberties. They marked the farthest advance in that direction which human thought had then reached — then or since — its arrival, in fact, at a goal, an ultimatum. But here we discern the difference in political creed between those two representative men — that it is fundamental, absolute, without remedy, not to be reconciled. Plainly enough as statesmen, under the circumstances, like Lot and Abraham, they had to go apart.

Plainly enough, too, we are in sight of the Connecticut Constitution, for here is the manifest seed of it, now germinant in its native soil.

It is, indeed, near by. We are back again within a short distance of the point in history from which we set out. The fixed frame of government that the colony shall adopt is, while Thomas Hooker is writing this letter, the theme of general talk in the three towns—with what pros and cons and diversities of counsel, is left to our imagination. Which talk will ripen a few months hence in that illustrious deed which we are here gathered gratefully to recall and to praise. If its visible antecedents, as I have imperfectly sketched them, are to be reckoned in the account of it, then truly it was a deed done not without full appreciation and clear consciousness, on the part of its doers, of its unparalleled nature and its profound meaning.

It has been a subject of no little inquiry among students of our history who the author — *i. e.*, so far as it may be said to have been the production of an individual — of our first Constitution was. The question, it may be assumed, never can be answered. Conjecture, based on certain not unreasonable though scanty supports, has most frequently assigned the distinction to Roger Ludlow, of Windsor, reputed to have been the foremost lawyer in all the colonies; a man of strong parts, active in affairs, capable of such a work. *Had* assigned it to him it should be said, rather; for there transpired recently, or comparatively so, fresh and important ground of opinion on the point, to add doubt to that conjecture, if not to turn the balance against it and substitute another in its place as more probable.

The discovery of the evidence to which I allude fitly fell to the fortune, or, more properly, was awarded to the skill of the present distinguished president of this society, whose large and zealous and conspicuously competent labors in the field of our colonial history have been a public service of the highest value, and justly entitle him an authority in that field second to none. It is to him that we owe the identifi-

cation and rescue from the tomb where it lay buried of that priceless letter of Thomas Hooker's that has just been quoted. (And I may as well interject here, what it would be an impropriety in me not to say somewhere, that I am under a degree of obligation to him for quite indispensable assistance in the preparation of this address — assistance most liberally and patiently rendered,— which it were difficult to overstate.)

There fell into Dr. Trumbull's hands a few years since, turning up among a miscellany of historic relics that came into possession of this society, a small manuscript volume, dating back to the time of the settlement of the colony, containing abstracts of sermons written in cipher, by Henry Wolcott, of Windsor. Divining at once the importance of what these notes might disclose, Dr. Trumbull applied himself to the task of their unlocking, and with his customary success. And for his principal and surely most satisfying reward, he had the pleasure of bringing to light a discourse of Thomas Hooker's, preached at Hartford on the 31st of May, 1638, some time before he wrote the letter to Governor Winthrop, eight months before the Constitution was adopted, of a character to make it certainly one of the most memorable of human utterances, and to fix on him, above any person beside, the presumption of, at any rate, an immediate concern in shaping the organic law of the new State. The text of the discourse was Deuteronomy i. : 13, and following verses: "*Take you wise men and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you. . . . captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, over fifties, over tens,*" etc. (I repeat it as it is in the notes — the latter part abridged.)

The notes themselves are so brief, and are a monument of such extraordinary interest, and so suitable to be rehearsed at this time, that, by your leave, I will give them entire.

They are under three general divisions: Doctrine: Reasons: Uses. (Or, as we should say, Applications.)

*Doctrine* — 1. That the choice of public magistrates, belongs unto the people, by God's own allowance.

2. The privilege of election, which belongs to the people, therefore, must not be exercised according to their humours, but according to the blessed will and law of God.

3. They who have power to appoint officers and magistrates, it is in their power, also, to set the bounds and limitations of the power and place unto which they call them.

(This last, obviously enough, with a glance in the direction of Massachusetts.)

*Reasons* — 1. Because the foundation of authority is laid, firstly, in the free consent of the people.

2. Because, by a free choice, the hearts of the people will be more inclined to the love of the persons chosen, and more ready to yield obedience.

3. Because of that duty and engagement of the people.

(*I. e.* because they will be in the position of a party to a contract.)

*Uses* — The lesson taught is three-fold :

1st. There is matter of thankful acknowledgment in the appreciation of God's faithfulness towards us, and the permission of these measures that God doth command and vouchsafe.

2dly. Of reproof — to dash the councils of all those that shall oppose it.

3dly. Of exhortation — to persuade us, as God hath given us liberty, to *take* it.

And lastly, as God hath spared our lives, and given us them in liberty, so to seek the guidance of God, to choose in God and for God.

In so few and such words did young Mr. Wolcott, of Windsor, set down the substance of that great manifesto of liberty ; how little deeming that his jottings are the sole record by which, more than two centuries later, it shall be redeemed from oblivion, and laurel with new and imperishable honor, the memory of the divine and statesman who gave it voice !

They present the structural bones simply of the discourse. The manner in which, in the hour, or more likely two hours, he spoke, the preacher, who had been renowned among the pulpit orators in England, the stream of whose fervid clo-



quence was ever wont to be rich and full, clothed them in flesh, is left to fancy. But what life in the bones!

That sermon, says Dr. Bacon, "is the earliest known suggestion of a fundamental law enacted not by royal charter, nor by concession from any previously existing government, but by the people themselves—a primary and supreme law by which the government is constituted, and which not only provides for the free choice of magistrates by the people, but also 'sets the *bounds and limitations* of the power and place to which' each magistrate is called." And considering the sequence of events, and the complete correspondence of the frame of government presently to be erected by those who heard him that day—for the assembled colony was no doubt his audience—with the propositions he maintained; who, respecting the paternity of the instrument by which it was defined, must not justify the conclusion of Hooker's latest successor in the gospel ministry at this altar (and long may he be the latest) "It is impossible not to recognize the master hand. It diminishes nothing of the proper honor of Roger Ludlow to say that the pastor of the Hartford church was Connecticut's great legislator also;" and the like verdict expressed in Historian Johnston's glowing sentence: "It is on the banks of the Connecticut, under the mighty preaching of Thomas Hooker, and in the Constitution to which it gave life, if not form, that we draw the first breath of that atmosphere which is now so familiar to us;" likewise the order in eulogy observed by Historian Bancroft, contemplating the same matter, when he says, "They who judge of men by their services to the human race will never cease to honor the memory of Hooker, and will join with it that of Ludlow, and still more that of Haynes."

A very king among men was this father of our commonwealth; of the true stature of majesty; great, not only in his day, but great in any day; whom we may linger a while to survey. He stood, indeed, not alone, but, pressed as we are for time, it is not feasible now to attempt, even in



fewest words, to call up in review the worthies, his associates, whose names are linked with his on that shining page of the sublime epic of freedom, which together they inscribed. Yet to himself, their chief, it seems not meet to omit some more particular reference, though necessarily circumscribed, than thus far we have made.

He was more than the representative man of the Connecticut colony. It is not too much to say that the genius of New England was incarnate in his person. His royal degree was early recognized. When he died, in 1647, John Winthrop, with whom he had so differed in counsel, said of him: "The fruits of his labors in *both* Englands shall preserve an honorable and happy remembrance of him forever." Cotton Mather, of Boston, writing a half century later, introduces a memoir of him in his *Magnalia* with saying that as the foreign resident who met his countryman in Athens, and promising to show him at once all the wonders of Greece, showed him Solon "as the person in whom centered all the glories of that city or country," so he now invited his reader "to behold at once the wonders of New England, and it is in one Thomas Hooker that he shall behold them."

No authentic portraiture of his person of any sort has come down to us, but if we may credit tradition, he was a man physically of a singular beauty of countenance, massiveness of mold, and mingled stateliness and grace of aspect. Educated at Cambridge University, the hearthstone of Puritanism, and for ten years or more after his graduation resident there as Fellow, he emerged thence about 1620, in the prime of manhood, full furnished with all liberal learning, and entered on his career as a clergyman of the church of England; of the Puritan Non-conformist school—though he was never a Separatist. It was not long before he displayed a pulpit power that was phenomenal; that drew vast crowds to hear him; and that so contributed to the ferment of the times as to provoke Archbishop Laud to resolve on silencing him.

The position he had attained in the public eye and regard, and the greatness of his influence, are reflected in letters of

information and advice concerning him addressed to Laud by one of his lieutenants residing in his neighborhood, in which he reports: "There be divers young ministers about us that spend their time in conference with Mr. Hooker, and return home to preach what he hath brewed. He is their oracle and their principal library. . . . I have lived in Essex to see many changes, and have seen the people idolizing many new ministers and lecturers, but this man surpasses them all for learning and some other considerable parts, and gains more and far greater followers than all before him." Again he counsels the archbishop that it would be prudence, if possible, to induce Mr. Hooker quietly to remove, and not suspend him from the exercise of his ministry, since, in the latter case, "his genius (he says) will still haunt all the pulpits in the country where any of his scholars may be admitted to preach." When, nevertheless, Laud set the law in motion against him, he wrote — this same Vicar of Braintree — "I pray God direct my Lord of London in this weighty business. All men's heads, tongues, eyes, and ears are in London, and all the counties about London, taken up with talking, plotting, and expecting what will be the conclusion of Mr. Hooker's business."

The prevailing repute of character in which he then stood is sufficiently testified by the fact, that upon Laud's proceedings being known, forty-three of the beneficed clergy of the church, all Conformists, united in a petition in Hooker's behalf, entreating the archbishop to suffer him to continue in his liberty, and in his ministry, as being to their knowledge, "for doctrine, orthodox, and life and conversation, honest, and for his disposition, peaceable, no ways turbulent or factious." But it availed nothing, and Hooker shortly, in 1630, fled away to Holland, where he remained for three years, ministering to his fellow exiles there, till he secretly returned to England to embark for Massachusetts.

To that sojourn in Holland, where he saw republican liberty, we must suppose Connecticut is in no small measure

indebted for her free birth. But also, and perhaps more still, to his intimate relations there with Dr. William Ames, a strong and deep thinker on the problem of government, one of the little-noted men who yet are fruitful sources of events, and who, in the judgment of some whose opinion is entitled to weight, was, politically speaking, the cause of Thomas Hooker.

A most lovable and loving soul, clothed with gentleness and patience, shedding around him always the sweet atmosphere of Christian piety, was this Father and Founder of our State. Yet withal of a high spirit, a marvelous energy of mind, and strength of will. One who knew him well said of him, "That he had the best command of his own spirit which he ever saw in any man whatever. For though he were a man of choleric disposition, and had a mighty vigor and fervor of spirit, which as occasion served, was wondrous useful unto him, yet he had ordinarily as much government of his choler as a man has of a mastiff dog in a chain; *he could let out his dog and pull in his dog as he pleased.*" And another that, as Mather tells us, had observed "his heroical spirit and courage," gave this account of him: "He was a person who, while doing his Master's work, would put a King in his pocket."

The portrait might be extended to other details; but in these few lineaments, supplied by the witness of his cotemporaries, we mark the undoubted features and proportions of a prince, and discern the reason of the figure applied to him in his own day, that he was "the one rich pearl with which Europe more than repaid America for all the treasures from her coast."

In the old burying-ground behind me, under the shadow of the walls of this sanctuary, his dust mingled with that of others of his faithful generation, sleeps Thomas Hooker, one of God's glorious servants, one of the finest heroes of humanity, to whom the world is under obligation perpetual and altogether immeasurable. The monument to him of bronze or marble which Connecticut owes it to herself to set

up, and which she will assuredly set up, is lacking. But wherever in the earth citizenship is free, and men dwell in their communities in loyalty to, and under protection of, the laws themselves have made, there *is* his monument.

Though I am apprehensive of having already exceeded my appropriate limit of time, there are yet behind certain things so essential to any complete circuit of my theme, even on the strictest construction of its bounds, that I must crave your indulgence while I briefly note them.

Especially one thing. We have been speaking of the adoption of her first Constitution as marking Connecticut's natal day. But the statement that it did so, were it meant by it that it marked the date of the birth of *self-government* in Connecticut, would have to be amended. You will recall that mention was made some way back of a provision by the Massachusetts General Court, on the eve of the emigration, at the instance of those departing, for the observance of some "present government" among them. It consisted of the appointment of a commission composed of two from each town, empowered to arbitrate in matters of general concern, till such time as the new plantation should supersede their function by agreeing on some "manner of government" for itself—but in no case was the commission to be of authority for more than one year. Whether or not it fulfilled that term of office is uncertain. If not by superseding it, at any rate in conjunction with it, the colonists, soon after their arrival, assumed control of their own affairs. What order they took in so doing—how they went about the business—the scanty record leaves us uninformed. But they did it. "By some process [as Dr. Bacon says] the government passed into the hands of the people." In January the new names of the towns were decreed, and their boundaries fixed. A court was held, at which elected magistrates were sworn, and public business transacted by them, and a body of committees from the towns, three from each; in which binal assembly was evolved "the seminal principle" of the two houses of our Legisla-

ture. Eight such courts met prior to May 1, 1637. At the court of that date, which was the ninth, and which is the first called the "General" Court in the record, a draft of troops was ordered, a tax levied, and a commander appointed for the Pequot war.

From which it appears that Connecticut was a State, conscious of its existence and of its powers, at least two years before the Constitution. Whatever changes and modifications in the system of conducting the institution of self rule the people, taught by experience, made, when finally they sat down to write it out, nothing is more sure than that the framing of the Constitution was substantially but a putting into law what was already inaugurated in practice; and that Mr. Hooker's sermon but the proclamation and defense of principles that had been from the beginning operative in the conduct of the colony affairs.

It was not the Constitution that made the State; but the State that made the Constitution. The State itself was born, not made; born, viz., of the people of the three towns; being produced of them under God, by their untrammelled action in the liberty of the wilderness, in obedience to what an eminent publicist of our day has termed "the natural law of accretion." That same writer has pointed out as a circumstance additional to those that have been named by which the genesis of Connecticut is distinguished from that of all other States, that it was achieved in absence, at once of territorial title (though there was a fiction of one), and of a defined geography. It was to be yet fifteen years before it knew its boundaries. It came into being on ground the ownership of which was at any rate problematical; practically a No-Man's land.

It was the Town as an organized community of people, "the only association," as De Tocqueville says, "which is so perfectly natural that it seems to constitute itself," that, as another has said, "is the primordial cell of the body politic" in the Anglo-Saxon line of civilization; in the municipal independence of which the sovereignty of the people

becomes originally operative; from which, again De Tocqueville observes, "the impulsion of political activity" springs; it was the three towns of our colony, which were three as three men are three, that under unique conditions of freedom generated the life of our commonwealth, and struck it into existence. Which is to be forever remembered.

I should travel beyond the province of my theme, and quite beyond the province of my competency, if I ventured an opinion touching the system of legislative representation that is best to conserve justice and the public welfare in Connecticut in these changed times; or that will be hereafter. But no one will dispute me when I say that so long as the Three Vines remain upon her seal, if any State of the Union has reason to magnify the claims of the town and to be jealous of aught that will subtract from its consequence as a factor in the body politic, it is the State of Connecticut.

The history—the great history—of our first Constitution *since* its adoption, upon which I had designed and hoped somewhat to dwell, I am forced reluctantly to pass and hasten to an end.

Some months hence, during this present year, is to occur the celebration of the centenary of our National Constitution. It is altogether fitting that this of ours shall have preceded it; for that Constitution was most distinctly and definitely of the extraction and lineage of the one our fathers made so long before.

In the review of the stormy scenes of the convention which framed the system of our Federal Government, so marked by the clash and struggle of opposing schemes, to which that larger occasion will lead, it will transpire—we may trust perspicuously, as it will deserve to—that at a point of crisis when the two contending parties stood at a deadlock, with no prospect of release from it, and the convention was doubting if it must not go home without a result, Roger Sherman, Oliver Ellsworth, and William Samuel Johnson, delegates from Connecticut, stood forth, and by proposing, and in the event procuring, the acceptance of



what is called "The Connecticut Compromise," caused the knot of difficulty to be loosed. And it will transpire further, that that action thus brought about, amounted, in effect, to the "grafting [to use Prof. Johnston's expression] of the Connecticut system on the stock of the old confederation;" that by it "her combination of commonwealth and town rights" was reproduced "in a similar combination of national and State rights" in the fundamental structure of the new government. And this, he declares, "is the crowning glory of the system which Hooker inaugurated in the wilderness, and of the commonwealth of Connecticut."

And what qualified Sherman, Ellsworth, and Johnson thus to take the saving part of mediators at a juncture so momentous, was the fact that they were Connecticut men—were of a race bred up on this soil under that system; wanted to it; acquainted with its workings. We of Connecticut are entitled to expect as the fruit of the public re-perusal of that passage of our country's annals, a brightening in the eyes of the whole nation, of the honors of our little State, and of its founders.

A mighty voice it was, that of Thomas Hooker, crying in the wilderness in the days of things, to look at, how small! foreordained in the blossoming to be revealed, how great! How far it has been heard! How living are its echoes still! An undying voice in this world! Abraham Lincoln's immortal speech on the battlefield of Gettysburg is but one of its reverberations. Thank God, for all the preparing of the ways and straightening of the paths before the feet of advancing humanity, of which, under His divine providence, hitherto, and, we must believe in histories yet to unfold, it was prophetic.

Yes, thank God. QUI TRANSTULIT SUSTINET. That QUI, as our fathers meant it, was their motto's regnant word. And it becomes their children in all generations to maintain it so; and by the vast ever broadening, and benignant harvest of the seed they sowed in weakness, as from age to age it grows before their eyes, to worship their fathers' God.



The morning exercises were concluded by

DOXOLOGY.

Benediction by

REV. FRANCIS GOODWIN.

## EVENING EXERCISES

AT THE

## Academy of Music.

---

HON. J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL, President of the Connecticut Historical Society, came to the front of the stage, and said that he was gratified to see so many ladies and gentlemen present on such a rainy evening, and that it gave him pleasure to appoint as chairman of the evening, a townsman who needed no introduction to a Hartford audience, HON. HENRY C. ROBINSON.



## ADDRESS.

BY H. C. ROBINSON.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

Were the United States France, and were the city of Hartford the city of Paris, our sky to-night would glow with fireworks, our streets would blossom with wreathed columns and arches, our parks would be picturesque with uniformed soldiers, and the air would be filled with the echoes of cannon and bells, and the shouts of wild enthusiasm! But ours and theirs are different ancestors. Our joy is not hero-worship. We are not looking back across a quarter of a millenium to the flash of a sword. There are events in human history which are too sacred to be honored, or get honor at all, from the mere flash of bayonets or the rattle of drums. Far be it from me to say one word against enthusiasm or demonstrations of it. Symbolism is a necessity, and it is a good necessity. We would not hinder the peal of the bell, nor throttle the noise of a single cannon. But they who met 250 years ago to prepare a written constitution, which should control the first free representative democracy of history, did a thing which invokes in us a sense of the sacramental; and there is a hush within us of all babble; and we ask only for the supreme eloquence of love and worship, which seeks not even the aid of words and phrases, and still less the glamour of ornament and parade. Yesterday we took these things as matters of course, these blend presences and absences. To-day we go to a cradle, and lo! it is a manger; but there is a birth there from God. Yesterday, I say, we took these things as a matter of course. Things of blessing, think of them: Self-government; a written constitution; justice open to the humblest citizen; educa-

tion free to all; industry honored; humility exalted; religion supreme. And think of the absences — of sword; of faggot; the inquisition; the star-chamber; exile; tyranny in despot, in church or state — all gone. And yet, my friends, we were born into all these good things — born into them as we were born into the sunlight and the clear, pure air. We have made no struggle for them, we have made little struggle to retain them — we were born into them. But they, the founders, were not. When one has temporarily lost sight by some curtain that has dropped upon his eyes for weeks or months by the spell of disease, he first learns what it is to be blind. When a political exile has worked out a year of life in the frosts of Siberia, he learns to know what liberty is.

I am not here to-night to tell the story of that day; it has been told in a masterly way this afternoon by our orator. I shall not attempt to repeat it. But we come for a few congratulations, as we look back to that early hour here again to-night, in the few minutes that we spend together, and, as we look back there, we see, first of all, that the fathers organized a pure democracy. Plato and Aristotle — I will not say the great men of their day, but great men of all days, abhorred democracy. The democracy that they saw and hated was the rule of the mob — a mob that banished Aristides. The republic of Rome, when it came into liberties and elected Tribunes, was again the rule of the mob; and the Tribunes gave way for the Cæsars. The republic of France, in the eighteenth century, was still again the rule of a mob. And the Italian Bonaparte built his empire on its ruins. Ours was a pure democracy, but it shunned the evils of Greece and Rome, and took its form from the country from whence it sprung.

It was more than that — it was a representative democracy. Here again the fathers went away from the evils of the older States, and took a step in the line of English thought and English liberty.

But, still more than either, it was a democracy under a writ-

ten law — a written organic constitution. Democracy, no less than monarchy, needs the limitations of a written constitution. The occasional will of the majority, born of passion, or of the influence of a demagogue, or, perhaps, of a man in uniform, may beat down the most sacred things in the family, in property, or in freedom of thought, unless restrained by the good letter of organic law. There have been democracies that had no written constitution. The republic of France, of which I spoke a few minutes ago, was a pure democracy, and it wrote beautiful legends, liberty, equality, and fraternity, but it was restrained by no organic law. And what was the result? The revenges stored in the hearts of the people of France, treasured up for centuries, against the tyrannies of bourbonism, ran riot in streams of volcanic wrath, and the wayfarer, as he walked through the streets of Paris, stained his boot with blood.

Once more, this written constitution of which I speak was made by the people. It was in no sense either a grant or a concession by any municipality. Much has been said to-day, much has been said in other days, in honor of our Connecticut town system. Too much can never be said. As a civilizing agency, developing the individual and the individual community, it cannot be too highly praised, and chiefly, because it has impressed upon civil government the supreme importance of home rule in local affairs ; and, in so doing, it has exercised a great restraining power in keeping down to a minimum the tutelage of the general government, even when that general government was of the people. But, my friends, this sacred ordinance, which we honor to-day, moved not from the towns, but from the people. There was no notion in the minds of any of the fathers, nor could there have been, that such a thing as sovereignty existed in municipalities. They had seen no such plantation or town. The town of which they knew owed allegiance to the crown and a faint allegiance to Parliament. These towns of the Connecticut Valley, discarding all sovereignty of the crown, and all sovereignty of Parliament, recognized

the sovereignty of the people ; and, while I would defer to no man in my honor of the town, it seems to me a superficial study of history and political philosophy, which insists that the towns granted or withheld anything from the people in the original constitution of Connecticut. The towns reserved no sovereignty, they had none to reserve. And from 1639 until the present time, under the original fundamental orders, under the charter, and under the constitution of 1818, the towns have had no power, except as it was given them by the organic law or by the general court representing the whole people. That general court, with great wisdom, has always left to the town its internal arrangements, its family affairs, so to say, so has our legislation honored the good maxim, that that government is best which governs least.

I have spoken of ours as a pure democracy. These founders came out from the noble old colony of Massachusetts ; but what did they leave behind them ? By no means, and by no manner of means, an advance in human thought equal to what they brought with them. There they left an attachment to monarchy ; there they left an attachment to aristocracy ; there they left the theory that the only persons fit to participate in public affairs were they who had a certain ecclesiastical standing. Our fathers brought no such thoughts here. In this organic instrument there is no allusion by name or title to any monarchy, or to an aristocracy, and no church membership was imposed upon citizenship in Connecticut. Their servility yielded to allegiance, loyalty to a personal monarch became devotion to pure law.

I have spoken of this one as the first written constitution of a pure representative democracy. It is true. But he would be an ungrateful and unworthy son of New England, who, in eulogizing the fathers, forgot to withhold that immense measure of gratitude which every citizen of New England and every friend of freedom everywhere has to-day, or ought to have, when he remembers the immense indebt-



edness of human liberty to the English common law. The great charter, executed on that little island in the Thames, and the "Law of the land," antedating the charter by centuries, and which was the birthright of Englishmen, were sure prophecies of the Connecticut constitution of 1639, and the federal constitution of 1787. It is not strange, but it is memorable, that the genius of our government has called from the old world three monumental pieces of literature: One, the famous history of democracy, by the illustrious Frenchman, DeTocqueville, written more than fifty years ago; another, the scholarly analysis of our constitutional government by the German, Dr. Von Holst; and, last of all, the most fascinating analysis of our country and all that is ours in a strange and beautiful philosophy by Prof. Bryce of Scotland.

And, speaking of Scotland, as I came in here to-night I could but remember that some of us were prevented by this greater occasion from going to another occasion of festivity in our immediate neighborhood conducted by our friends of Scottish birth and ancestry. They meet to-night in an adjoining hall to commemorate the anniversary of their great poet; and as I thought of him and this occasion, and remembered the things he had written in matchless verse, it seemed to me that, after all, his greatness is greatest in that he was the poet of the people. He was the man who dared to look and see, and sing for the rights of man in sweetest strain. He looked through the "rank," which is but a token, the "guinea stamp," to the pure gold itself, which is "the man." And so let our Scotch people go on with their eloquence, and dance in memory of Bobbie Burns, and they are celebrating with us the cause of civil liberty and human freedom.

If we look back 250 years to that time when the fathers met together, it seems a simple scene. They were simple souls. They were unconscious of their own greatness. They were poor; they were hungry; they were surrounded by all kinds of hostilities of nature; and, least of all, had

they any kind of conception of the grandeur of their own creation, whose genial blessings have radiated, like the beams of the sun, to every zone. If we look back at that scene of 250 years ago, and then look at our nation as it is to-day, with its inconceivably great resources, its wealth, its power for all that is good and true and beautiful in human life, its leadership in political thought, we can only say of it that it is the one supreme, inexplicable, glorious miracle in human history. That picture I shall leave to be described by the eloquent lips for which we all are waiting.

MR. ROBINSON :

Historians and scholars differ about the question, whether the chief credit for the original constitution is to be given to Thomas Hooker or to Roger Ludlow. Roger Ludlow's name appears first in all the gatherings of the judges before the constitution, and many scholars attribute to him the inspiration of that document, and most scholars credit him with its language. More recent scholarship has credited its inspirations chiefly to the divine. We are fortunate in having one with us to-night who carries the blood of old Thomas Hooker in his veins and who is also a distinguished honor to the profession, which Mr. Ludlow honored, and I take pleasure in introducing John Hooker, Esq., of Hartford.

## ADDRESS.

BY JOHN HOOKER.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

The planting of a State is always a subject of interest. Its history is generally one of adventure and heroism, and we read it as we would a romance. This is generally so where mere temporal advantage was the ruling motive, but the subject becomes one of profound interest where there predominated a great moral purpose. Such a purpose entered into the planting of our State, and of all New England, even though they did not dream they were sowing the seeds of empire, and we do well to honor these noble founders. They were wise men in their day, and laid foundations deep and strong, and we may study the history of the time for the mere wisdom that it teaches. But we miss its great lesson if we do not study, and understand, and become inspired by, the *spirit* of those grand men. They came here in the fear of God, and holding their first allegiance due to him. And though they had a perpetual struggle for existence, against savages, against most rigorous winters, against the most scanty supplies of the necessities of life, they found time and heart to look to the future, and felt their responsibility for the character of that future. The church, the school, the college, a wise system of government—all that could affect the moral welfare of their descendants—these were the things that they thought of and labored for. They had sometimes their petty ambitions, their jealousies and rivalries, for they were but human ; but there was a great pervading enthusiasm to establish an intelligent and God-fearing people. All honor, therefore, to those brave, good men.

But we ought not to forget that we are all, in a sense, if not *founders*, yet *builders*. We, as they, build for the next generation, and the next, and the great lesson we are to learn from them is, that we are to build, as they did, *with a great moral purpose*. No man can live for himself alone; but we may make our lives morally worthless if we live in the mere present, seeking our own personal success in life, and not striving to make the world better for our having lived in it. There are noble men and women living to-day, grand souls, who by their toil and self-sacrifice have helped to set the world forward. But how manifest is it that the vast majority of men, even in this Christian land, and men of intelligence and social position, are living but little above a material plane; certainly with no thought of any allegiance owed to God, or of any duty to make warfare upon the powers of evil.

Let us then be builders with a high moral purpose. All this is easy exhortation; almost common-place. But I beg you, in the few minutes allowed me, to follow me through a certain philosophy that attends the matter of building up a truly Christian society.

1. And, in the first place, the work of up-building is a work of *Reform*. The true builder is a reformer. The reform of a hundred years ago, reaching then the high-water mark of the progressive thought of the time, becomes the conservatism of to-day, and the reformer of to-day must build higher. The true reformer is not necessarily an iconoclast. Sometimes he has to be. Thus the reformer Hezekiah "brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and he called it Nehushtan," — that is — only a piece of *brass*. It once represented a vital truth, but the life had all gone out of it, and the Jews had made a mere fetish of it. But in the composition of a genuine reformer there is ordinarily no quality of destructiveness. He is in the truest sense a builder. So far as he would destroy some entrenched wrong, it is merely the overthrow of that which is itself a usurpa-

tion, and the re-establishment of that which is a dethroned right, or which rests upon clear, but disregarded, principles of right. This is illustrated in the overthrow of slavery in this country. The spirit which assailed it was not one of destructiveness, but a spirit of up-building, of lifting dethroned manhood to its rightful place. The ordinary idea of a reformer is of a pugnacious man, who carries around a moral shillalah ; whereas, in fact, he is generally a member of a peace society ; or of a morose and gloomy man ; whereas, he may be, and sometimes is, overflowing with wit and humor, and the best sort of company. All that specially marks him is a burning enthusiasm for humanity. I know no truer women, in all that goes to make true womanhood, than those who, as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, are carrying on a war against the saloons.

2. The true reformer, in the second place, is never satisfied with mere expedients and make-shifts. These have their place, and it is often absolutely necessary to resort to them. But when the immediate exigency is passed the true reformer goes to work to remove the cause. He considers not merely conditions, but theories. He studies and seeks to apply fundamental principles. Compromises are often not only expedient but just. They enter largely into the framework of society. But a compromise with some vice, no matter how entrenched, merely postpones an inevitable struggle with it. Unsettled questions of right, it has been said, have no mercy for the peace of nations. Compromises with slavery only postponed, and in the end made more terrible, the final death struggle of freedom with it. When the anarchists were hung in Chicago, their execution was an expedient. No wrong, fancied or real, could justify their dynamite war on society, and there was no way but to deal with them with a strong hand. But the danger to society from the anarchy of the hovel is not so great as that from the anarchy of the palace. There will always be a determination to suppress disorder. Life, property, all prosperity, rest for their security on social *order*, and the

nation would rise by a common impulse to put down any organized attack upon it. But the most dangerous anarchy — and the more dangerous because it does not come in conflict with the spirit of order — is that of the men, who, by combination and by the power of money, control our legislation, or pervert it where they cannot wholly control it, or where they can do neither, lubricate, by the use of their money, some hole of escape. They do not terrorize society; it is no part of their object to terrorize anybody; but the thoughtful lover of his country, and of equality and justice, looks on with the gravest apprehension. When the true builder of society has discharged his painful duty toward the men of violence and blood, he addresses himself to his higher and more serious duty to this more dangerous class, and sees that a correction of what is wrong here will largely remove the cause of the plebeian anarchy.

3. The true reformer, in the third place, builds upon the foundation of old ideas, but the superstructure is of new ideas, or of ideas that have been overlooked or lost, and are practically new to the age. The case is not unlike that of our wonderful inventions and material improvements of all sorts. These are generally but new uses of natural forces that have existed from the foundation of the world. And upon our discoveries and inventions a later age will build a like superstructure of its own. This is true evolution. So it is with moral and religious ideas. The old Roman who, as a magistrate, could coolly condemn his son to death, could never have got from the declarations of Scripture as to God's fatherly love, the same conception of it that a father to-day gets. The new conception as compared with the old, is practically a new truth. Yet the ideas of both would have the same foundation. So I say we build in our day with ideas that are practically *new* in our day, though all resting on old foundations. Take the religious dogmas of two centuries ago; where are many of them to-day? and even some of those most tenaciously held? yet all were built, according to the intelligence of the age, on that everlasting foundation, the Gospel of Christ.

Our Lord told us that the Spirit of Truth would *come* (involving the idea of a new arrival), and would *guide* us into all truth. This involves the idea of *progression* in the guide and in the follower; and progress too in truth itself. Paul told us to "serve in the *newness of the spirit*, and not in the *oldness of the letter*." The spirit is ever new and ever progressive, and leaves the letter far behind. I was once in Geneva on the fourth of July, and in that home of Calvin gave as a toast—"John Calvin as he would be if he were here to-day." That grand, brave, sturdy old man, if here to-day, would, I verily believe, hardly pass an acceptable examination in Calvinism. The world of religious thought moves, though it still revolves and will ever revolve, around the great central source of all light.

4. There is a great duty on the part of sober and intelligent men, not to stand aloof from, but to fraternize with, and guide, that less intelligent, and often too impatient and so too hasty and impetuous spirit of reform which almost always shows itself in connection with true reforms. It is extravagant and often fanatical, but is well-intentioned and needs to be guided and not discouraged or suppressed. The world would never move if there were not some men so zealous as to go too far. What a force there is, if rightly directed and controlled, in the Salvation Army. Benjamin Du Plan—the "Gentleman of Alias," as he was called, who lived in the south of France a hundred and fifty years ago, was a noble specimen of a true reformer in the highest social position joining with extravagant zealots, because he knew they were on the Lord's side. *The Hartford Courant*, in an editorial notice of his life, recently published, says: "To be a Protestant was to be an outcast in every way. It was this lot that young Du Plan chose for his worldly portion. The reader will not be surprised to learn that there was Protestant fanaticism as well as Catholic bigotry, and that there were abnormal developments of religious zeal. Many women and girls took up the character of prophetesses and preachers, fell down in ecstasies, and



went through all the scandals of fantastic demeanor and imposture. Du Plan was deterred from his choice neither by the extravagance of some of the sect, nor by the persecutions. *It is largely owing to his labors that the French Protestant church is alive to-day.*"

5. And this brings me, in the fifth place, to a point which I conceive it to be very important to have fully understood. It is that new ideas, especially on moral and religious subjects, which are finally accepted as God's own truth, find at the outset their most determined antagonists in the church and among really good men. I am not speaking against good men as such; to nobody are they dearer than to me. I am not speaking against the church; few love the church more. But I am speaking of a fact, and speaking from the study of history and the observations of a long life. The fact seems on its face almost incomprehensible, yet is easily explained.

In the first place, almost every advance is in the direction of larger liberty—liberty of thought, liberty of action, of less responsibility to mere law and more to one's own soul, the grandest of responsibilities. Now liberty is near neighbor to *license*, and every man of loose morals takes the side of liberty against restraint. And not merely the bad men, but all the men of courageous thinking who have already antagonized prevailing beliefs. Take the universal belief of a hundred years ago that the world was made in six days, by six successive fiat's of God, and that the Scripture so taught. Thirty years after science had clearly established the fact that the world was thousands of years in being made, there were probably twenty outside of the churches who accepted this as the truth where there was one in the churches. And the former were regarded as little better than infidels. But God's truth was with the infidels, and the error was with his people. Again, take the question of future probation. (I do not propose to touch the merits of the question.) Almost every bad man favors the idea. He sees in it deliverance for himself. He sees in it license. Yet the man

who desires only to know what is God's truth on the subject, is allowing himself to be led astray if he lets himself be influenced by the consideration that all bad men accept the new idea, and the great majority of good men reject it. Early in this century Sir Samuel Romilly, one of the noblest men England has ever known, then a member of Parliament, set out to reform the criminal law of England by abolishing the death penalty for petty offences. A body of acts which, voted down overwhelmingly at first, he by great effort and long persistence finally got passed, is known as the "Romilly Acts," and England is to-day proud of them, and not one vote in ten thousand could be got for going back to the old law. Yet when he began all society was against him—and the church with the rest. There was a universal belief that any letting up of penalty would only increase crime. And who were with him? Some good men were early gained over; but every thief, every robber, every vile man and woman, was on his side. Yet God was on the same side with the thieves, and not with his people.

There is another reason why the church and good men are thrown into antagonism to nascent truth. The church rests on *old ideas*. Its people have been brought up on them. They think them everlasting truths, and that they embrace all truth. They can not realize that the kingship never dies, though the sceptre may pass to new hands.

A worn-out dogma died. Around its bed  
Its votaries wept as if all truth were dead.  
But heaven-born truth is an immortal thing.  
Hark, how its lieges give it welcoming —  
"The King is Dead — Long live the King."

So the moment a new idea is brought before these good people which seems to conflict with what they have been taught, they bristle against it. Without ever examining the question they take a position of antagonism to it. There is often much to respect in this spontaneous rallying to the defense of old truths to which they feel that they owe an

unhesitating and unquestioning allegiance. I have more respect for a bigot than for a mere surface indifferentist. And then these same defenders of the church look out upon the supporters of the new idea and see a motley group of all sorts—broad religionists, cavillers, agnostics, and, beyond these, all sorts of bad men, and they think that nothing can be clearer than that they are on the Lord's side. Yet, in most cases, a half-century later the church will have accepted the new idea as God's truth.

Let it be understood then, that, as an almost universal rule, new truths come with a great discredit. It is right that there should be a strong presumption against them, and to require that they be supported by a large preponderance of proof. But it is more than this. They encounter a strong, unreasoning, often bitter, prejudice; a prejudice that I think is hateful to God; for I believe that God loves above all others the man who loves truth, and is willing to suffer, and, if need be, to die for it. God makes his truths stand upon their own foundation, not on the patronage of the church or society. The *New York Nation* said some time ago, in an article on Garrison, that no one not living at that time could have any idea of the state of public opinion when that reformer began his work. It was a few fanatics on one side and all society on the other. I know that to be the fact, for I was myself one of the fanatics. Where is society now? The old prophets, with their long hair, their garments of sackcloth, and their denunciatory proclamations in the market places, were the "cranks" of their time, and very repulsive ones too; yet God made them his mouth-piece. What more uncouth than John the Baptist, wearing a goat skin and living on locusts and wild honey as he wandered about; and yet he was the forerunner and herald of Christ. And when Christ came he was called a glutton and wine-bibber, and was despised and rejected of men. Hear what Paul says:

"Not many wise after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish

things of the world, that he might put to shame them that are wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, that he might put to shame things that are strong; and the base things of the world and the things that are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are." I. Cor., i, 26-7-8.

All who come to save the world must expect to be assailed as gluttons and wine-bibbers, or with other terms of contempt; but they will be none the less the commissioned servants of God. Remember then, ye who would be builders for God in the state, in society, in the church, that you are to encounter the sneers of society and the antagonism of that church which is dear to us all, and are to find hosts of supporters with whom you have little in common, many of whom you must regard with utter disgust, but are to have the great comfort of feeling that God is with you and that the future will bless you. Christ was willing for the sake of truth to become of "no reputation." Are we?

But let us be comforted with the assurance that the toil and self-abnegation and self-sacrifice of noble and consecrated souls will not be lost. Under a great divine purpose, that has run through the ages, the world is moving on to the completeness of its deliverance. All redemptions come by crucifixions. Blessed are the crucified. Christ told his followers that in the latter days there would be a great spiritual experience among men. Our greatest philosopher, Fiske, gives it as the result of his profound studies, that man's physical development is complete, and that his development in the future is to be of his inward nature. Thus the last word of the best philosophy of the day accords with the prophetic word of eighteen centuries ago. And God's word is pledged, and his nature too, for the final triumph of good.

There is then a great final good to which the world is tending, and its progress toward which we can aid by our endeavors. All that poets have dreamed, all that seers have beheld in their visions, is to be finally realized. The king-

doms of this world are to become the kingdoms of Christ our Lord.

I once, in sad and thoughtful mood,  
Stood in an old-world solitude,  
Amidst the scattered ruins vast  
Of a great empire of the past.

But now, with feeling more intense,  
I watch the gathering elements  
Of a grand empire yet to be,  
World-clasping in immensity.  
That empire shall be Love and Peace ;  
Its sway begun shall never cease ;  
No drum-beats shall its morns salute ;  
No trumpets shall their clangor bruit ;  
But, following the circling sun,  
Each day shall be with song begun ;  
A song of praise, Oh God, to Thee ;  
A song that shall unbroken be,  
Save by the deep-toned anthem of the sea.

MR. ROBINSON :

That is the kind of a lawyer we have in Hartford ! You see he can preach better than the ministers, and write poetry better than the poets !

MR. ROBINSON :

We have heard a great deal to-day in praise of the general court, and we can never hear it praised too much. We are fortunate to-night it having its gifted speaker with us, and we will hear from John H. Perry, Speaker of the House of Representatives.

## ADDRESS.

BY SPEAKER PERRY.

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

The power of little things has become proverbial. The diminutive beginning from which has sprung our native State, that prosperous and influential unit in the grandest country upon earth, has inspired an eloquence to-day which is unexcelled even by that of its unrivalled founders. The acorn and the mustard seed have begotten trees and metaphors with striking impartiality since literature first began.

But among those small things, the first of which is out of all proportion to their size, the misused monosyllable bears preëminence.

I beg you, therefore, to remember that while with two associates I have the honor to represent on this occasion the lower branch of the General Assembly, I am the Speaker *of*, and not the Speaker *for*, the House.

In my official capacity nothing in the way of speech making is expected of me, but silence, and very little of that.

It has occurred to me, however, since sitting here to-night, the predestined victim of your monosyllabic error, that after all I ought to be heard of this audience briefly, for I represent in the General Assembly that town to which the three original towns which you represent contributed Roger Ludlow, the commonly accredited author of our ancient Constitution.

Following the soldiers who on the present site of my native village broke the last remnant of Pequot power in Connecticut, Roger Ludlow founded Fairfield.

From almost that day to the present time I have not lacked an ancestor resident in the town.

I am inclined to presume, therefore, a little upon this ancient link of cousinship between us.

Never having had any constitution myself worth mentioning, I have sat to-day and fairly hugged myself to think that I belonged to something which had one so well worth celebrating — a Constitution now replaced only because it was in part too rigorous.

Whose vines have ever produced such shade and fruit as ours have?

There is no self-governed nation on the face of the earth to-day which does not sit under their shade, and misses not the fig tree.

But that instrument, the birth of which you have just celebrated, creates a body which shall twice each year, to use its own language, "agitate the affairs of the Commonwealth." I represent to-night the lineal descendant of that body.

They do not permit the descendant to sit but one-quarter as often as the ancestor. It revenges itself by sitting four times as long.

Its paternity is unmistakable. It still agitates the affairs of the commonwealth with inherited aptitude and increasing vigor.

To this body the instrument which represents the one now celebrated needs to be introduced early in the session, but becomes a familiar acquaintance long before its close.

That instrument, and one of the towns from which it emanated, provoke kindred suggestions in the legislative mind. We are cribbed, cabined, and confined by it. We press restlessly against its bars. It is the vantage ground from which the haughty legal member is enabled to rout his enthusiastic and progressive lay associate and march off in specious triumph.

It is remorselessly thrust in the face of the brave reformer, and made in endless ways obnoxious to the upper rows because so flippantly invincible.



The earnest suburban member who goes to his General Court fraught with schemes for the amelioration of the public and the benefit of his fellow men finds much to quarrel with in it. It is prone to stop him just short of perpetual renown upon the statute book. As wielded in the House it is a ruthless weapon. It cuts down those who think themselves most entitled to a hearing, who feel prepared to do their State the most good, who are the most ambitious.

Speaking for the lower branch of the General Assembly, I am bound in truth to say this much.

It is difficult for us to "agitate the affairs of the Commonwealth" as we would like to on account of it. While it may be the charter of your liberties it is a galling fetter upon ours.

But I ought to trespass upon your time no longer. When you have so kindly invited a stranger to come within your doors, he should come in quickly and shut them, letting in as little wind as possible in the process.

In conclusion, therefore, I beg to say that having heard your city so eloquently baptized to-day as the very birthplace of democracy, the body which I represent, constituted as it is this year, feels strangely out of place here and apologizes for its intrusion.

MR. ROBINSON:

As you all know, we ran along under the old charter of 1662 until 1818. I have claimed for the founders that they had very high ideas of religious freedom. I spoke relatively. They had ideas far in advance of their times. But they, too, were in straight-jackets; and we ran along with the old charter until by and by that straight-jacket began to chafe so much that it could not be worn, and the old toleration party started, and to that party we are largely indebted for the charter of 1818, which recognized all men as free in religious matters, and forbade preferences to any sect of Christians. The old toleration party and the Constitution were ably advocated by a newspaper published in this city. We have its editor here to-night. He has been an editor for fifty

years. He has been a leader of his political party for a quarter of a century. He has been offered political honors, but he has declined them. He has raised his journal to a position which may well excite envy in the journals of the country. It is an honor to any State. Now in a ripe age, but by no means in any feebleness, he lives in the enjoyment of the respect and affection of all the good people of this city. I take great pleasure in introducing Alfred E. Burr.

## ADDRESS.

BY HON. ALFRED E. BURR.

I feel a little embarrassed, Mr. Chairman, on rising, after the very flattering remarks that our chairman has made with regard to myself. I feel quite undeserving of such compliments as he has seen fit to pay to me personally. I should hardly have been upon this platform this evening, fellow citizens, were it not for the fact that two of my ancestors—Benjamin Burr, on my father's side, and Thomas Olcott, on my mother's side, came to Hartford in 1635, one year before Thomas Hooker came here. They came with that company from Newtown, who had a hard time of four or five months in getting here, leaving Newtown—Cambridge now—in June, and arriving here, I think, in October.

Well, sir, we feel a pride in our ancestors. We all feel a pride in the men whose ability and foresight inaugurated the organic law on which the United States government, in its federative principles, was founded in later years. We feel a pride in the integrity, the religious principles, the firmness, the valor, the intrepidity of those men who came here to settle this new country.

All that can be said has been said by the Rev. Mr. Twichell in his excellent paper delivered to-day. I have read that address with very great pleasure. He leaves nothing for us to say with regard to the dignity, the statesmanship, the valor of those men and of the great work that they accomplished. But will you permit me, in the five or ten minutes allotted me to-night, to say a word on the other side—touching some of the faults of the men who came here to

settle this country 250 odd years ago? I refer to their social relations—to something that has not perhaps been alluded to to-day by the orators who have spoken on this interesting occasion.

Your chairman, for instance, has spoken of the great contest that was waged in 1817, when our Constitution was formed. It was the Toleration party, known as the Toleration party—not a political party of the Federalists or Republicans, but a “Toleration party” that made the Constitution of 1818; and, as your chairman has said, the *Times* was established as a Toleration paper; it was established in order to secure what the tolerationists believed they were entitled to—religious freedom. Perhaps that is too strong a term, Mr. Chairman. They wanted to be relieved from the taxes which the Congregational Church imposed upon all denominations, unless they came before the clerk of the society and took an oath, or gave a certificate that they did not belong to that society. So the Episcopalians, Methodists, and Baptists, all joined and opposed the Presbyterians and Congregationalists—for it came to that, and they secured our constitution, in which is, I believe, three sections, protecting free religious opinions.

But our old friends of 250 years ago were not tolerant; they were not so tolerant as we are to-day. I believe that the world moves. I believe that society is better to-day; that the world is better to-day than it was 250 years ago. I believe there has been progress in that time. The men who came here and ran away from religious intolerance, were intolerant themselves on some occasions. For instance: Thomas Olcott was a constable about the time they founded the constitution that we are praising so highly, and he led a posse of ten assistants against the Dutch who had settled a few years prior to the time when he came here. When they came out with their cattle to plow the lands on the hillsides by the Connecticut River, he took his posse of constables, and with sticks and clubs beat the cattle over their heads until he drove them out of their yokes; he broke their chains; he

set them adrift, and he despoiled the fields of the Dutchmen, and drove them off, because they did not assimilate in their religion and social relations with his company of Englishmen. He would not let them plow; he persecuted them, and was not tolerant. And they certainly were not very tolerant in their religious views at that time.

Now, if you will permit me, Mr. Chairman, speaking of the social condition of those times, I find in this little volume of the Olcotts an account of the death of the father of Thomas Olcott's wife, David Porter, of England. He came over here to visit his daughter, and was drowned in the Connecticut river; they buried him, and there is an account reported to the county court of the funeral expenses of that occasion, which you will pardon me for reading, to show the items and social relations and state of society at that time. It was about the year 1678. The wife of Thomas Olcott was still living, but her father was drowned; and this is an account of what was expended on David Porter for the recovery of his body and burial:

"By a pint of liquor to those who dived for him, 1 shilling. By a quart of liquor to those who brought him home, 2 shillings. By 2 quarts of wine, a gallon of cider, to the jury of inquest, 5 shillings."

While they sat on the "late lamented," they took something to drink, and enjoyed themselves! It would be a singular fact to see a scene of that kind in these modern days, Mr. Chairman. The bill adds, for the funeral:

"By 2 quarts of wine, and a gallon of cider to the jury. By 8 gallons and 3 quarts of wine for the funeral. Cost, 1 pound and 15 shillings. By a barrel of cider for the funeral, 16 shillings. By 1 coffin, 12 shillings. By a winding sheet, 18 shillings."

That sheet cost more than the coffin!

"To pay for the grave, 5 shillings. Total, 4 pounds, 14 shillings, and 4 pence. Given into the court at Hartford, December 9, 1678, by the son of my mother, Mrs. Olcott, per me, Thomas Olcott" (son of the original Olcott).

Here was more money expended for liquor than for the coffin and grave and all the other expenses of the funeral. Well, in many respects, we look back to those old men as better than ourselves, and we are urged to tread in the paths they trod. But where, oh where was the Prohibition party at that early day?

MR. ROBINSON :

And where was the Temperance Union?

MR. BURR :

There was no Temperance Union, Mr. Chairman, I don't think those old men got intoxicated, but they, in their dreary lives along the banks of the river, where they had hardly enough to eat, where the country was undeveloped, where the tomahawk and the scalping knife were always flirted in their faces, where they were surrounded by dangers,—they “took a little” on special occasions; for instance, at funerals.

Now, this old man Olcott—I do not wish to defend him on account of relationship—he was a merchant; he came over here, and he dealt in goods and real estate; he loaned money. He was worth \$7,500 when he died—and that was a great fortune then—more than \$700,000 would be now; and in his will he said the Lord lent him the money, but he got big interest on it! And in the account of his household effects he had houses and lands in Greenfield, in Windsor. He had buildings there also.

MR. ROBINSON :

No doubt, Judge Hayden will tell you just where Greenfield was.

JUDGE HAYDEN :

It is called Bloomfield now.

MR. BURR :

There he had two farms; and he had a prayer-book, two bibles, two jugs, and a warming-pan, and four “chayres,” two candlesticks and snuffers. Well, those were primitive times.

Now, gentlemen, it is not fair, perhaps, to represent those men precisely in this light. They were stalwart men—strong men in will power and in vindicating what they be-

lieved to be right. They did a good many things that we commend. In their federative system, in the confederation of the towns, they laid the foundation of our Federal government, as has been stated. There was John Mason, who came a little later. What did he do? He came up to Hartford. He had learned something of military science from the Dutch. He had been in their employ as a military man. He raised ninety men in Hartford, forty men at Saybrook, and Uncas gave him thirty Indians, and he went around in a schooner to New London. What did he do with all this military force? He gathered up all the straw and dry hay, and he piled it up one night over the huts of the Pequots; he covered their dwellings with this combustible matter, and set it on fire. When the Indians came out, blistered, and their hair on fire, he shot them down — killed them on the spot — then burned up their women and children! Now you would say that was rather harsh treatment, wouldn't you?

MR. ROBINSON.

The Indians did some pretty mean things first, though.

MR. BURR.

I don't know but you and I would have done the same thing. Possibly it would have saved our scalps. They were obliged, in defending themselves, to resort to some harsh measures. I only mention it to show what those men in that day could do. The Pequots, the ugliest of the tribes, were as bad as the Mohawks — though Uncas was friendly and called off some of the tribe. He was an Indian seceder. The Pequots would have scalped and murdered that entire white settlement had not some such harsh means as Mason resorted to been taken to destroy those Indians. But I mention this incident to show that those men, who risked everything here, were ready to defend their lives, and to carry the war in among the Indians, if it was necessary, and they did so. And they turned out strong men who followed



after them. We have felt the impress of those early men all over this country. There was Ethan Allen. He relied upon "Jehovah and the Continental Congress." They were deeply devoted Christians, those men; pious men; they would pray, and fight, and not yield. Allen, he carried our institutions up into Vermont. There they are to-day. Vermont and Connecticut are almost alike in their institutions, in their representation, in the titles to their laws. Connecticut town names are all over Vermont. Ethan Allen was one of those men who made that State about what it was. Then there was Capt. Wadsworth. The Governor of New York sent an agent here to govern Connecticut, in the early time; and when he came to make this colony obey, Wadsworth told his drummers to beat their drums and make a terrible racket, and he then turned to this New York agent and said, "If you interrupt this drumming I will put daylight through you": and the agent went back to New York; he did not put his hand upon Connecticut. I speak of this as a little incident showing the character of the men in those early days. They had great obstacles to contend with, and they met them as the obstacles came before them, and they triumphed; and I now feel, Mr. Chairman, in view of what the orators of the day and the gentlemen who have spoken, have told us, very proud of what Connecticut has done in laying the foundations of a great, broad government—a nation greater, broader, and better than any nation in this world, with all the resources necessary to support, not only sixty millions, but one hundred millions and two hundred millions of people within her own borders. Her fisheries, her iron in the mountains, her metals, gold and silver, her coal and natural riches of every kind—are resources that no other government in this world is possessed of; resources by which this people could sustain themselves if there was a wall around this country as high as that of China. We have this free government; we have prosperity; we have the great developments of riches from ocean to ocean, and every

resource that a people may need and be proud of—and all this has grown out of the little three towns, they tell us! And well may we be proud of the men who settled in Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield.

MR. ROBINSON.

We are fortunate to-night in having with us a representative of the old colony—the old mother colony, the old Bay State which we all love. He bears two honored Connecticut names: one Bushnell, one of the greatest sons of Connecticut or of America; the other Hart. He represents Harvard, the oldest of our New England Universities, and, while we feel it our duty to whip her every year on the foot-ball field, and base-ball field, and at New London in the regattas, still we hold old Cambridge and Harvard in the highest affection and esteem. I take pleasure in introducing to-night Prof. Albert Bushnell Hart, of Cambridge.

## ADDRESS.

BY PROFESSOR HART.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

The chairman has graciously introduced me as a representative of Harvard College ; but I stand here to-night also by another title, namely, that of a lineal descendant of six sturdy citizens of Connecticut, all of whom lived in or near Hartford County ; and as one brought up in the wider Connecticut of the Ohio Western Reserve.

Harvard College and Cambridge have a peculiar reason for interest in this celebration. The orator to-day, in words which seemed to carve out before our eyes and to set before us Thomas Hooker as a living man, in words of eloquence stirring, forceful, the orator to-day was talking about a Cambridge man ; and it is perhaps not too much to say, Mr. Chairman, that had Thomas Hooker waited one year, instead of having founded the commonwealth of Connecticut, he might have been the first president of Harvard College. And Harvard has another reason for feeling grateful to those who two hundred and fifty years ago came together to form an organic law for their infant commonwealth : for, shortly after this time, the little college became very much embarrassed ; there was distress so great that they appealed to the towns of Massachusetts and of the other colonies to help them ; and there stands to this day upon the treasurer's book of receipts an item which shows the sort of contribution which came to them. It reads thus : "Received, a goat 30 shillings, of the plantation of Watertowne rate, which

died." At that time Harvard College appealed also to the frontier settlements in Connecticut, and we find that those settlements out of their poverty generously subscribed and brought a contribution of "corn, for the poor scholars in Cambridge." The gratitude of Harvard College was expressed for upwards of sixty years in a practical way by educating Connecticut boys to fill the places of the Hookers and Davenports as they passed away. Then came Yale College, which took up that work, and has well carried it through. The fathers of the Massachusetts men and of the Connecticut men shared alike in the hardships and sacrifices of those early days, and Massachusetts and Connecticut men share alike in the triumphs and prosperity of the present day; for the success of Yale College, and of Wesleyan and Trinity, is the success of sound learning and good education, and it is a success in which we of Massachusetts take as much pleasure and pride as you of Connecticut.

And now let me turn to the other side of the great constituency which I represent. I have spoken for the East; let me say a word for the West. There are various kinds of constitutions. I presume you will know the classic story about an honorable member from the State of New York who approached Theodore Roosevelt in the New York Legislature a few years ago, and asked his support for a certain measure. Mr. Roosevelt said: "I cannot; it would be unconstitutional." "Ah," said the Hon. Tim So-and-So, "but what is a little thing like the constitution between friends?" A Frenchman once undertook to prepare a constitution for his country in two articles. "Article 1st. All Frenchmen shall be virtuous. Article 2d. All Frenchmen shall be happy." The first article has never been completely carried out; and, judging from the reports of the Panama Canal, the second article is not fulfilled in any better fashion. Another Frenchman, still living, Rochefort, embodied his constitution also in two articles. "Article 1st: Nobody must do anything. Article 2d: Nobody enforces the foregoing article."

The framers of the organic law for these three commonwealths were not deceived by any such illusions as to the character of human nature and the probable virtue of the whole community, nor were they inclined to favor anarchy. The constitution which we are discussing, which we have heard read to-day, whose history we have heard so well described, that constitution contains principles of good order and common sense, for which every Western State should be grateful, because every Western State has incorporated them. The vine which you see upon the shield of Connecticut is one of those running vines, which puts down a shoot; it takes root, and that puts down another; and so the constitution adopted two hundred and fifty years ago is traveling from State to State, and from community to community, throughout the West. The men who framed that constitution were not framing it for Windsor and Hartford and Wethersfield: they were making a constitution for Ohio and Iowa and Dakota. In the name of the mother State, which sent out the first colonies, and in the name of these daughter States of the West, which owe so much to the Connecticut spirit, as well as to the Connecticut Constitution, I most heartily congratulate you upon this two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of a great occasion.

MR. ROBINSON:

We have two more speakers, both of whom will interest us. First, one for this old town of Hartford, which for 255 years, as Newtown and Hartford, as town and city, has been a fountain of intelligence, benevolence, freedom, and sense, which is now a model city, and which I may say in all its municipal history has never been invaded by rings, by corrupt judges, or corrupt officials. We are all proud of it; and we are glad to see here its first executive officer, his Honor Mayor Root, and shall be happy to hear a word from him to-night. (Applause.)

## ADDRESS.

BY MAYOR ROOT.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

As we look back on the line of history for 250 years, and recall the early struggles, privations, and hardships of those noble men who guided the destinies of that colony, which included Hartford, Windsor, and Wethersfield, and whose lofty genius gave birth to a constitution of self-government, and, beginning from it, during two centuries and a half has grown a fearless and prosperous commonwealth, well may we rejoice and take pride in celebrating this event, which is the foundation of our unparalleled development, — not in wealth alone, but in intelligence and virtue. The men of that colony have passed away, but the principles as embodied in that first constitution have been perpetuated by a fitting ancestry whom you represent. Many of those men were leaders ; and their examples live on, arousing and influencing the living. All remote history is imperishable. The same spirit which animated the people of that period was handed down to the Revolution ; and later on, during our own time, in that great struggle in the defence of a free government and the maintenance of the Union, these three towns, imbued with the spirit of their forefathers, loyal and patriotic, sent into the field in the late war 4,500 brave and determined soldiers, and on nearly all the great battle-fields they were represented. We have reason to feel grateful to those early settlers who found their way to and landed upon the banks of the Connecticut ; and we to-day are enjoying the privileges of a prosperous community, with all the advantages which comfort, happiness, educational advantages, and charitable institutions and good government afford.

MR. ROBINSON :

We have letters here to-night, but it is too late to read them. They will be printed with the pamphlet which will give an account of the occasion. They are from distinguished gentlemen, our guests, guests of the society. We regret also the absence of his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor of the State. We are proud to see that the Executive of the State is here, and he has kindly served us to-day by reading the Constitution ; and our evening will be concluded by an address, and our meeting would not be characteristic or proper if we did not hear from him, — from the distinguished Senator of Connecticut, loyal to the old memories, devoted to all progress, good man, good soldier, good citizen — Joseph R. Hawley.



## ADDRESS.

BY HON. JOSEPH R. HAWLEY, U.S.S.

[Reported in *Hartford Courant*, January 25th.]

General Hawley was greeted by hearty applause. He said that after witnessing their enthusiastic reception of Mr. Burr, he felt that there was hope for him. Mr. Burr may have made mistakes in politics—at all events in his prophecies sometimes—but outside of politics, in every movement for the good of the community, nobody can find fault with the Hon. A. E. Burr. (Applause.)

General Hawley remarked that he felt a thousand times repaid for coming on to witness this celebration. The worship of Connecticut's history had been a passion with him. He had known nothing concerning the preparations for this celebration, but had hoped that everything would be well done. And now he felt like one who has partaken of an abundant meal. He had been more than satisfied with Mr. Twichell's eloquent oration.

Down there [referring to his life in the U. S. Senate], among thirty-seven rivals, he had always asserted that no State has a history which can compare with that of Connecticut. Is there a nation like it? Look at France, sometimes a republic, sometimes a monarchy; who can count the changes in her government? And Great Britain has changed more in 50 years than Connecticut in 250. It was true, as stated, that Mr. Twichell had not left much for others to say, but there were some matters of which he (Hawley) was in the habit of boasting, which Mr. Twichell did not allude to, because, for one reason, they were too modern. A State may be visited by a flood or an epidemic; the first thing is to introduce

a resolution in Congress granting national aid. Why, a State, imperial in its domain, had a little drouth, and a bill was actually passed granting money with which to buy seed corn. Is there anything of that kind in Connecticut? And so with pleuro-pneumonia and with epidemics among the people. The Connecticut answer to the requests for government aid is, "What have you done for yourselves? Where is your State board of health?" And then States come begging in aid of education, to which we have always considered it our first duty as a State to attend. Then there is the matter of a military force, ready for emergencies; many States have none at all; here is a little force of 2,500 men, all thoroughly drilled, with guns and all other equipments, ready to take the cars at a moment's notice.

General Hawley continued by saying that there were certain peculiar views in which he delighted. He liked to see how our young men have gone west, and have always been certain to come to the front as leaders. They have learned how to hold meetings; can take the chair, appoint committees, and decide points of order. He had been taunted in Congress with strikes, but fortunately here we have had but little of these. One reason for this is because there is no want or grievance which cannot find relief. It is repression that makes trouble and strikes, and rebellions. After alluding to the curious town organization of Connecticut he spoke of the resemblance between the constitution of Connecticut and that of the United States.

He closed by saying that he was rejoiced, he was glad of this meeting, and he hoped that there would be in all our public schools a volume containing the history of Connecticut, written without political bias, showing its fidelity to the fundamental principles of civil liberty, for the instruction of those who are coming to our shores from foreign countries and who are born here of foreign parentage, and whom we must teach to become children of Connecticut. He extended the regrets of Senators Platt, Hoar, and Evarts at their inability to be present.

## LETTERS OF REGRET.

---

FROM EDWARD E. HALE.

ROXBURY, MASS., Jan. 21, 1889.

*My Dear Sir,* — I regret extremely that I am not able to accept the invitation of the Connecticut Historical Society for Thursday evening, January 24th.

The occasion is one most interesting to every student of American History, and I am very glad that the society has arranged to recognize it by appropriate services.

Has your attention been called to the interesting notice which Mr. Bryce makes on the adoption of the first constitution of Connecticut, which he says, I suppose rightly, is the first written constitution in the history of the world.

Very truly yours,

EDWARD E. HALE.

---

FROM ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

BOSTON, MASS., Jan. 7, 1889.

J. HAMMOND TRUMBULL, ESQ., LL.D., PRESIDENT.

*My Dear Sir,* — I am greatly honored and obliged by the invitation for the 24th inst. It would afford me pleasure to attend the commemoration of so interesting an anniversary. But I am constrained to deny myself, and can only offer my thanks and regrets to the Connecticut Historical Society. Believe me,

Respectfully and truly yours,

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

FROM DR. GEORGE E. ELLIS.

BOSTON, MASS., Jan. 21, 1889.

TO THE SECRETARY OF THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*Dear Sir,* — Did my engagements permit I should have much satisfaction in accepting your kind invitation, by participating in the commemoration of the adoption of the First Constitution of Connecticut. But I am compelled to deny myself the pleasure of it.

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE E. ELLIS.

FROM HON. GEORGE F. HOAR.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 21, 1889.

TO THE SECRETARY OF CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*My Dear Sir,* — I am very sorry that my public engagements prevent me from taking part in the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of Connecticut, January 24, 1889.

No public event except the planting of my own State at Plymouth could be nearer to my heart than the founding of Connecticut, in whose history I feel a pride scarcely less than filial.

Your learned and famous society will fitly perform the duty of commemorating the event of the adoption of that constitution, which was so important in the history of constitutional liberty. I shall read the report of the proceedings with great interest.

I am faithfully yours,

GEORGE F. HOAR.

FROM JOHN BACH McMASTER.

PHILADELPHIA, PENN., Jan. 22, 1889.

TO THE SECRETARY CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*Dear Sir,* — I am much honored by the kind invitation of the Connecticut Historical Society to be present, on the afternoon of Thursday next, at the commemorative exercises, and regret, very sincerely, that college duties will make it impossible to attend.

Very truly,

JOHN BACH McMASTER.

FROM D. WILLIAMS PATTERSON.

NEWARK VALLEY, N. Y., Jan. 22, 1889.

THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

I regret exceedingly my inability to meet the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford on Thursday, 24th inst.

I have now lived so long in the State of New York, where the town is as powerless as a wax doll in the grip of the county, that I would greatly enjoy a few words in favor of the town as the foundation of civil government.

I hope everything will be thoroughly enjoyed by the members and guests of the society, and I will look for my pleasure at the printed reports.

Sincerely,

D. WILLIAMS PATTERSON.

FROM JUSTIN WINSOR.

74 SPARKS STREET, CAMBRIDGE.

Mr. Justin Winsor regrets that a previous engagement prevents his accepting your kind invitation to your anniversary on Thursday, 24th January, 1889.

FROM JUDGE W. S. SHURTLEFF.

SPRINGFIELD, MASS., Jan. 21, 1889.

*Dear Sir,*—I am complimented by an invitation to be present at the ceremonies in commemoration of the adoption, two hundred and fifty years ago, of the first constitution of your State, and should be very glad, but shall be unable, to attend on an occasion certain to be interesting to all of your society and your guests, and surely to be pleasant to me, not only because of the intellectual feast to be furnished and the intercourse to be enjoyed with many old friends, but because I, as a "son of Yale," cherish memories of my Connecticut life that are among the most pleasant of my amassing.

Born in Vermont, educated, for the most important part, in Connecticut, and a long time resident in Massachusetts, I am a loyal New Englander, naturally; but, also, by conviction, result-

ing from historical study and reflection, I have come to regard each and every of the States that form New England as exceptional communities. State by State, as stars whose light, long seeking through space its revelation, appear to astronomical observation, New England shone out upon the throne-burdened world—the constellation of Liberty, forever to be, in the political heavens (the two last words *need* not be incompatible companions)—a monition to the oppressor and a “sign” of hope to the oppressed—Connecticut as lustrous as any of the cluster.

The boundary lines between us are only on the maps—the territorial division is only for convenience of local government. (Oh! resolve away the recollection of that old disputed line!) The memory of our united struggles and common success in good causes should force us to forget that the surveyor's lines exist, and to determine that they shall not separate us socially. Success to your celebration. Surcease to State jealousies and increase to New Englandism in New England and the world over, is the wish of

Yours, very gratefully, for the courtesy extended by your bidder to your feast,

WILLIAM S. SHURTLEFF.

---

FROM EDWARD CHANNING.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS, Jan. 23, 1889.

TO THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*Gentlemen*,—I regret it is not in my power to accept your kind invitation to take part in your commemoration of the first constitution of Connecticut. The passing of the preamble and eleven orders by the freemen of Connecticut two hundred and fifty years ago, forms an important landmark in our constitutional history. In these days especially, when the tendency is toward centralization, it is well to go back to the old time and see with what jealous care our fathers safeguarded the rights and liberties of communities. The joining together of the three towns also forms an important epoch in the history of federation.

Again thanking you for your invitation, I remain

Very truly yours,

EDWARD CHANNING.

FROM PROF. ALEXANDER JOHNSTON.

PRINCETON, N. J., Jan. 21, 1889.

THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*Gentlemen,* — A lingering convalescence leaves me unable to comply with your summons to meet on Thursday of this week with others who believe they see peculiar importance in the political history of Connecticut, to celebrate the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the formation of the first constitution of that commonwealth. The democratic nature of that constitution has long been insisted upon; and the untiring acuteness of one of your own distinguished members, Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, has given Thomas Hooker his proper place as master of the work. I have stated elsewhere the grounds for my own belief that the sound political principles of a people trained for one hundred and fifty years under that constitution resulted, in 1787, in giving its bi-cameral character, one of its most essential features, to the Constitution of the United States. The seed planted by Thomas Hooker has given us not only the three vines of Connecticut, but the statelier plant of the Union. With many thanks for your invitation, I am

Sincerely yours,

ALEXANDER JOHNSTON.

FROM EX-GOV. HENRY B. HARRISON.

NEW HAVEN, Jan. 22, 1889.

*Dear Sir,* — This morning I received your letter of the 20th inst., inviting me to take part in the proposed commemoration of the great act done at Hartford two hundred and fifty years ago, in the establishment of the first formal written constitution of government ever made in America.

If it were possible, I should be most happy to unite with my fellow citizens in celebrating that event — so memorable in the history of Connecticut, and so signal in the history of constitutional government among nations. Circumstances beyond my control, however, compel me to decline, with the greatest regret, your courteous invitation.

Very respectfully and truly yours,

H. B. HARRISON.



FROM DR. NOAH PORTER.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., Jan. 22, 1889.

TO FRANK B. GAY, ESQ., SECRETARY CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*My Dear Sir,* — I hope to be present at the exercises of the Connecticut Historical Society on the 24th inst., but my voice is for the present in so uncertain a condition that I dare not undertake to make even a ten minutes' address. With thanks for the invitation.

I am, very sincerely, yours,  
NOAH PORTER.

---

FROM PRESIDENT GEO. WILLIAMSON SMITH.

HARTFORD, CONN., Jan. 22, 1889.

MR. FRANK B. GAY, SECRETARY CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*My Dear Sir,* — The invitation to the reception of the Connecticut Historical Society on Thursday evening, is received with thanks. I have other engagements for the evening, but will try to be present part of the time; I regret, however, that I shall not be able to make a speech.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,  
GEO. WILLIAMSON SMITH.

---

FROM BISHOP JOHN WILLIAMS,

MIDDLETOWN, Jan. 21, 1889.

MY DEAR MR. HOADLY.

*Sir,* — I have received an invitation to be present at the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the first constitution of our State.

I am sorry not to be able to be present, for it is a most interesting and important occasion, but my engagements are such, that although I am to be in Hartford at a later hour that day, I cannot well reach there before the services would be over.

I do not know that any reply is expected, but I should like to make some one interested understand that I appreciate fully the courtesy of the invitation, and am sorry not to be able to accept it.

Faithfully yours,  
J. WILLIAMS.

FROM SENATOR PLATT.

WASHINGTON, D. C., Jan. 21, 1889.

*My Dear Sir,*— I fear that I shall be unable to attend the celebration on the 24th; voting on the tariff may not be concluded, and whether it is or not, the question of what is to be done with the omnibus bill, which has now come over to the Senate, is upon me with all its perplexities. I regret this, for I want to come for my own enjoyment, very much. It may be that I can make a flying trip, but I fear not.

Very truly yours,

O. H. PLATT.

FROM EX-GOV. CHARLES R. INGERSOLL.

NEW HAVEN, Jan. 22, 1889.

FRANK B. GAY, ESQ., SECRETARY CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*Dear Sir,*— I regret that it will be impossible for me to attend the meeting of the Connecticut Historical Society in commemoration of the first constitution of Connecticut, to which I have received your kind invitation.

The occasion is one in which I should be very glad to participate if my engagements would permit me to do so.

With thanks for your courtesy, I am

Very truly yours,

C. R. INGERSOLL.

FROM JUDGE RICHARD A. WHEELER.

STONINGTON, Jan. 22, 1889.

THE CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*Messrs.*— Accept my sincere thanks for your kind invitation to attend and participate in the commemoration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the first constitution of Connecticut, on the twenty-fourth day of the present month.

Be assured that it would afford me the highest satisfaction to be present and enjoy the anniversary, but the present condition of my health is such that I must forego the pleasure.

Gratefully appreciating your cordial invitation, and with assurance of high regard, I remain

Yours very truly,

RICHARD A. WHEELER.

FROM HON. JOHN M. HALL.

HARTFORD, Jan. 22, 1889.

FRANK B. GAY, ESQ., SECRETARY CONNECTICUT HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

*My Dear Sir,*—Your kind invitation to be present at the evening session of the celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the first constitution is duly received. I regret that I shall be unable to be present in the evening, owing to other peremptory engagements Friday.

Trusting that the celebration may be a success, I remain

Yours very truly,

JOHN M. HALL.

---

MR. ROBINSON :

Now, we are not too old to give three cheers for the founders of the constitution, and then the band will give us "America."

(Cheers and music given, and meeting adjourned.)













LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 110 517 6 ●